

The Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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THE SUPREME ISSUES

IT IS no mere play upon words to say that the supreme issues which now face the nation have been brought clearly into the open arena of debate by the President's action in proposing, and urging, the enlargement, or change, of the membership of the Supreme Court. The so-called "era of good feeling," which followed after the overwhelming victory of the President in the elections, has now been blown away, like the illusion it was, by the strong winds of reality. It is now clearly apparent that the fundamental problems which for many years have been underlying, and causing so much economic and social maladjustment and depressions and suffering, can no longer be ignored, and must be dealt with. Into the forefront of the great debate, of which the Congress in both branches will be the determining center, but which will, as it ought to, extend itself to the press, and the pulpits, and all other other opinion-forming agencies of this democratic nation, now

come the most fundamental questions. The Constitution and the Supreme Court are both at stake, therefore, by consequence, the national form of government is also at stake. All the patriotism and wisdom of the country's leaders of thought should be exercised to the full as they face the situation.

For many of these leaders the issue is unmistakably clear. Among them are the leaders of the minority party, and many newspapers, and various members of the "conservative" branch of the dominant party. For them, the President's action is nothing less reprehensible than a deliberate "striking at the roots of that equality of the three branches of government upon which the nation is founded," so that he may "centralize in himself the control of judicial as well as executive functions. The Constitution, which the Supreme Court has guarded, developed and held true to its great, original design, would lie helpless before him."

So writes the New York *Herald Tribune*, expressing clearly and boldly what many other papers and persons think and write or say, in varying degrees of frankness. The Hearst papers, indeed, go even further. They declare that American democracy is dead, and that dictatorship has been chosen in its place, by the will of the people themselves, which the President merely represents.

No doubt, few save Mr. Hearst would go so far as to draw such an extreme conclusion based upon so limited a premise as is afforded by the President's message; but Mr. Hearst's opinion does represent the fear of many others that the traditional democracy of the United States is threatened by the President's action. On the other hand, such views as those of the *Herald Tribune*, and such fears as those expressed by Mr. Hearst, seem utterly baseless not only to the supporters of the President's plan for the reorganization of the Judiciary, but to many others who while not convinced that Mr. Roosevelt's proposals are in themselves the most effective remedy for a desperate situation, nevertheless believe that some remedy must be found and applied, and that the President's plan will at least open the way for it. Nor do such observers believe that such a remedy need upset the Constitution, or destroy or even impair the just authority of the Supreme Court. But they do believe that neither the Constitution nor the Supreme Court should be so rigidly interpreted within the limits of an economic system that has grown unelastic to meet the actual conditions of today, as to serve as the fetters upon national progress rather than as the instruments of that progress.

There are many Republicans, as the voting in the elections proved, who agree with the vast majority of citizens that the Supreme Court's power to block legislation which deals with labor problems and economic measures by enlarging the scope of federal authority must be in some degree reformed. The overwhelming nature of the Democratic victory was unmistakably indicative of the popular will that its government should take action along the lines which the Supreme Court has declared to be unconstitutional—yet which, in many instances, were upheld by a minority of the Court itself in terms which powerfully criticized the majority opinion, a fact which should be carefully considered by those idolatrous worshippers of the status quo who seem to believe that any and all criticism of the court is sacrilegious. There have been many proposals advanced by various authorities on constitutional problems as to how the Court might properly be curbed in its assumption of what seems to such critics to be an arbitrary and excessive degree of authority. One such proposal was that only by a greater vote than a five-to-four decision may any statute be declared unconstitutional. Others have

called for a two-thirds, or a four-fifths majority. As Dorothy Thompson has pointed out, even so violent an opponent of the President as former Senator James Reed at one time supported such a measure.

That the Supreme Court should not be directly curbed but rather that its power to limit congressional action should be lessened by laws giving Congress enhanced power to legislate in economic fields is a view increasingly held in many quarters. That the amendment of the Constitution should be the basis of such power is advocated freely, hence the shocked surprise manifested by many commentators on the President's message seems out of place. The constitutional issue is squarely before the people, for any serious attempt to modify the relation of the Supreme Court to constitutional interpretations inevitably raises the larger issue.

It is to be hoped that it will be dealt with thoroughly. The nation is in a tempest of clashing and sometimes irresponsible forces. A foundation of agreement on fundamental principles is most clearly needed. It is far better to face the situation honestly and clearly than to drift onward through a rising tempest of strikes and lawlessness to disaster and possible chaos.

Week by Week

MR. ROOSEVELT'S proposals for a reform of the judiciary require careful and objective appraisal. The power of the courts is of

The Trend of Events	sovereign importance in all times, and the right view of their position can hardly be obtained from the vantage point of recent controversies and difficulties. So far most
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attention has been riveted on the suggestion that a justice who reaches the age of seventy must either automatically retire or be coupled with a younger shadow of himself—a veritable coadjutor, holding the same rank and authority. This is a most interesting stipulation. The Constitution provides that members of the Supreme and the inferior courts shall hold office "during good behavior." Should, therefore, the intent of the law sponsored by the President be to establish an old-age limit, either in fact or in effect, the Court might properly find it unconstitutional if and when it were passed. The resultant situation would be rather amusing, but it would compel the nation to think out the relations between its fundamental law and present conditions. Is it possible to think that those who framed Mr. Roosevelt's proposal had this in mind? At any rate, a far more easily pursuable route toward a "subservient" Supreme Court would have been a law increasing the number of justices. No constitutional flaw could then have

been found. Meanwhile the nation will listen with interest to the discussion in Congress. Arguments pro and contra ought to be weighed in a spirit of impartiality bred of deep regard for the national welfare. There is no point in getting unduly excited.

DURING the week, another important civic fact was written into history. Following another Southern lynching, a Virginia newspaper—Richmond's goodly *Post-Dispatch*—suggested that a federal law alone could root out the tendency to commit brutal group murder. State rights are still important matters below the Mason-Dixon line, and this editorial stand indicates that enlightened public opinion despairs of getting some commonwealths to do what civilization and justice alike require. And indeed it is hard to find any reason for postponing a federal anti-lynching law any longer. We have a nation-wide prohibition of kidnaping, which has already done a vast amount of good. Action against lynching mobs would, of course, be far easier, since it is impossible for a crowd to run away. Just one possible eventuality must be reckoned with. Slowness and indecision in dealing with Negro offenders against the moral code would undoubtedly lead to swift secret killings by individuals. Private murders in such instances might even be condoned by state courts. All this only means that in the final analysis law enforcement is the necessary accompaniment of any worth-while law.

ALREADY the great difference between passing laws through the Seventy-fourth Congress and passing them through the present Seventy-fifth seems to be visible. Difficult Devaluation This year the administration cannot pay the legislators, as they say, in the only money whose value they never dispute: patronage. The patronage was spent last term, and besides, one of the most important measures the President is sponsoring is designed to restrict that fertile currency as much as possible for the future. These conditions make it very hard to have a program of legislation with the various elements coordinated. Conditions may likely furnish a field day for minority interests. In the effort to force through a central program, the administration will be under enormous pressure, and perhaps under the plain necessity, to permit the passage of heterogeneous laws which various blocs value high enough to warrant a return in support for administration measures. Bargaining will have to be more in laws, less in jobs. The only alternative appears to be the abandonment of hope for a group of new enactments rationalized by any consistent thread of policy whatsoever. Those who found the first New Deal contradictory should certainly prepare

to tremble. Congressional committees are already undertaking encyclopedic investigations. Major contradictions are already decried in neutrality and trade proposals and in spending and banking plans. The parliamentary abilities of the President and the intelligence of public opinion will be tested to the innermost grain. As Mr. Farley's standard currency passes out of circulation, far less stable money threatens to take its place.

PLEADING for a widespread human resolve to mitigate hatred and selfishness, Pope Pius addressed the Eucharistic Congress at Manila. We have grown accustomed now to these congresses. The Eucharistic Congress The public manifestation of faith by great throngs of Catholics; the solemn Masses, said with all the liturgical earnestness of tradition; the many brilliant addresses, by scholars and preachers of all lands—these are phenomena which one must see anew if one's impressions of them would be abidingly fresh. What really stirs us this time is that the youngest of commonwealths, born in part of contact with American experience, should be host to this gathering at the gateway to the Orient. The Filipinos are a great people. They have begun their experiment in modern self-government with determination, in spite of vast and mounting difficulties. Their rulers have displayed rare tact and nobility. It is with pride that one remembers the deep religious convictions that have shaped this new nation, and will surely continue to modify its public conduct. Yet all of us sense, too, that behind these islands is the East—perennial mystery, perennial sadness, perennial potency, in which Christianity is perhaps destined to wage the most far-flung of its contests with the human spirit. This whole Eucharistic Congress is a petition for victory there. It summons to mind shades of great apostles for several centuries, and recollections as well of the missionary dreams which stirred saints of the Middle Ages. To us their enthusiasm and their task have been handed down.

FATHER MICHAEL EARLS, whose sudden death in New York grieved and startled so many, was possibly an incurable romantic. A Good Friend He went about expounding a vision of humanistic Christianity — what his Jesuit forebears had once meant by *litterae humaniores* — with an ardor neither obstacles nor disappointments could abate. There was, for example, his devotion to the memory of Miss Guiney. Time, energy, patience and such money as could be gotten together were all expended in keeping alive the spiritual significance of this brave little woman, whose every quip sent Father Earls into spasms of delight. Yet on the other hand he could sponsor

many very remote, almost incunabulistic interests. One never stopped marveling at his vitality and his enthusiasm. He was a veritable reservoir of lore, but at the same time a fountain bubbling of its own creative accord. We here have good cause to think of him. Regularly, unfailingly, his voice would sound at the door, and in he would come with something—something that was always alive with human interest, though it might be either a joke or a project. Perhaps one could have said correctly of him that all his geese were swans. But that was because of his old-fashioned New England Catholicism, which saw in every vestige of the Faith that was culturally expressed a symbol of the glory that was and might be again. Men like Father Earls can be only imperfectly realized through their writings. Yet these also must not be forgotten.

IT WAS perhaps natural that speakers at the recent luncheon of the National Board of Review should have devoted considerable time to looking askance at film censors. There is a convention about the stultifying effect of censorship, which is widely subscribed to especially by those identified with the quality of the output in any field affected by censors. Hence, the reported speech of Mr. Hal Hode, Hollywood representative at the feast, is quite in order, in ascribing the evasion and sugar-coating which, he said, brought film producers into derision, to censors and the movie public whom they serve. But while we have no interest in denying that censorship in any field may be short-sighted and stupid, we question whether the motion pictures specifically have suffered from it to anything like the extent implied. The exact contrary, we suspect, comes closer to being the truth. Motion pictures are an amorphous art, which started mechanically, on the basis of no spontaneous artistic self-expression, and hence without the benefit of any general nucleus of culture. Such censorship as has given them constructive form has also given them life. The most notable spurt in superior motion picture production ever observed in so short a space of time, for instance, came as the result of the censorship—for we presume it would be put into that category—implemented by the Legion of Decency.

THE DEMANDS of that body were not and are not in the least stultifying. Beginning with the basic reality of the motion picture situation, which is the fact that movies are a popular art, affecting not merely picked and special groups but the great masses, including an overwhelming number of children, the Legion proposed sound general standards, positive rather than negative. The formative stimulus of this was instantly felt

throughout the motion picture world. If we may venture an opinion, based upon long and devoted movie-going, what ails motion pictures far more than the restriction of moral liberty is the restriction of plain intelligence—and that is not imposed from without. The average quality of writers and producers has improved out of all knowledge, of course; but it is still true that the chief enemy of good movies, after speed of production, is ordinary stupidity in high places. The things done to a major classic like "Vanity Fair," or a minor classic like "The Last of the Mohicans," are samples of what is really destructive in picture-making; and they have nothing to do with censorship. On the other hand, many instances can be offered, as we have said, where the challenge of legitimate censorship has proved a vitalizing factor, and has been met creatively instead of conventionally. The tragedy of "The Children's Hour" was transferred to the screen intact—indeed, with increased poignancy—precisely because the producer worked with constructive intelligence within limits set by the very proper interdiction of the use, for the heterogeneous and largely juvenile movie audience, of basic factors in the stage play.

MORE than \$11,000 have been subscribed up to the time we go to press to the fund for the relief of Spanish Catholics now being collected by the Brooklyn *Tablet*. This is a creditable showing, considering that the fund was opened only two weeks ago; but it is a very meager amount when contrasted with the huge sums collected for the various funds to aid the Reds, both in this country and abroad. So far as we know, only THE COMMONWEAL, among the more than one hundred Catholic journals of the country, has directly supported the Brooklyn *Tablet*, and urged its readers to subscribe. Some fifty of our readers have sent contributions to this office, amounting to \$421.35, which have been forwarded to the *Tablet*, and will be acknowledged individually from the *Tablet's* office. We trust that many other readers of THE COMMONWEAL have forwarded their checks or cash directly to fund headquarters: Spanish Relief Fund of the Brooklyn *Tablet*, 1 Hanson Place, Brooklyn, New York. All funds are forwarded to Cardinal Segura through a representative of the Spanish laity in Vatican City. The money is urgently needed, for the relief of millions of women and children, refugees, and the wounded and sick. In no sense is it a war fund. It is greatly needed charity. And we hope that many other Catholic papers will open subsidiary funds, or cooperate with the Brooklyn *Tablet*. American Catholics should not continue to lag behind the Catholics of other lands in succoring their fellow Catholics in Spain.

THE UNITED FRONT

By LOUIS MINSKY

OF LATE there has been an increasing disposition among churchmen to question the wisdom of the "united front" in which religious groups join with secular bodies for social action. The bone of contention has been the presence in such movements of Marxist elements. The question has consequently arisen as to the propriety of religionists joining with Communists both in view of the increasing attacks upon the latter by society and by reason of the Communist ambition to destroy the Church.

Now the willingness of many churchmen to identify themselves with the united front is itself a confession of the impotency of religion in the social struggle, for most believers in religion would prefer to do without the Communists. In fact, they would like most of all to work within the framework of the church or synagogue. But it is a sign of their immense idealism that they would rather run the risk of working with Communists than the risk of contributing to social stagnation by remaining passive.

There are, however, genuine reasons for inquiring very closely into the wisdom of church and synagogue groups entering united fronts. This problem involves not only the Communist question but the whole relationship of religion to secular social movements.

The objection to cooperation with Communists cannot be dismissed by the charge of timidity. There are many rabbis and Christian clergymen who are dauntless enough on social matters to have aroused the ire of conservative laymen and yet who would think twice before entering united front movements which included Communists. They are motivated not by safety but by realism. Religion after all has a certain witness which gives a measure of authority and respect for its message. There is danger—rightly or wrongly—that this witness may be discredited by any sort of alliance with Communism.

Moreover, the social concern of the church and synagogue, although manifestly not as vigorous as that of Communism, will eventually prove the most productive of results with the least evil of consequences. If religion's message is not as revolutionary as Marxism's it is at least compensated by the fact that it reaches the people whose con-

The views of this prominent non-Catholic on the principles of uniting and distinguishing faiths, religious and contrariwise, are important contributions to a problem we all must face, as Father Parsons shows elsewhere, whether we want to or not. The crudely American question, "So what?", is too rarely asked of Socialists, Communists and Liberals, and when it is posed by someone with an understanding of secularism, it is a very fruitful question, from which we have no right to turn aside.—The Editors.

version is most necessary to bloodless social change. There is something to be said for a technique which influences the kind of people who need changing most. Aldous Huxley has offered history as proof that the most effective propaganda is not that

which reaches the largest number of persons but which converts the proper people who later make history. The religious effort is likely to be the most efficacious not because it converts the masses, who are already partly convinced, but because it may move that group which is most likely to come to leadership in the future. The question of cooperation with Communists therefore reduces itself to a choice between a strategy which stands in danger of ridicule and resentment and a slower method which has the virtue of a certain prestige and is more acceptable to the people who hold the key to social change.

But the problem goes deeper than this. It concerns the question as to whether religious agencies should cooperate with secular bodies at all. There has been a growing disposition to be sympathetic to such cooperation, as clergymen have felt the increasing urgency of preaching the "social gospel." But this flirtation with the secular social forces is based upon a dangerous half-truth. This is the belief that a new social order will resolve mankind's individual and collective problems. The emphasis has been exclusively upon an economic solution while the moral, ethical and religious aspects of world anarchy have been completely ignored.

The danger of the united front lies precisely in this tendency to offer an incomplete analysis of the chaos of our day. Problems of selfishness and sin, of a moral code and an inner life will still be with us when the new order of economic justice reigns. This is why the religionist must reject the solution of the secularist. It is also the reason why the Church must not be tempted to risk a diminution of its influence in the future on the theory that an era of justice will automatically insure for it a safe place in the hearts of men. If religion were to assume the leadership of the united front and be able by sufficiently strong representation to maintain that leadership the problem would not be so imposing. In fact, there might be good reason to believe that a united

front with the religious forces in control would be a desirable movement, for it would both be able to obtain a stronger hearing for the message of the united front and, at the same time, exert a beneficial influence upon a secular radicalism. Unfortunately, however, such is not the case. In every united front or cooperative effort the secular forces are in control. The religious element must, therefore, bow to the will of a secular majority.

The dilemma of the Church forces is at once apparent. The religionists will help to usher in the new social order but once the secularists have come to power there is no guarantee that they will not discard the morality, the ethics and the ideals of religion. It is seriously to be considered that in identifying himself with secular social action the religionist is helping to propagate a materialistic or at best a humanistic way of life. The secularist's exclusive concern with an economic solution, while not necessarily resulting in the mechanistic civilization of Communism, might conceivably lead to a social order in which religion would be relegated to an insignificant place. European social movements are evidence enough on this point. An attitude of hostility toward the Church has been established which has inevitably influenced liberals, radicals and workers everywhere. This hostility will not be eradicated by the participation of a handful of religionists in united front endeavors.

It is no wonder that Catholic strategists in America have been loud in their insistence that social reform is no substitute for Communism and will not eradicate it. This assertion grows out of the conviction that secular social movements are always in danger of going to extremes because they are without the checks which religion imposes. Therefore, to the Catholic no solution is ideal which does not place the religious way of life at its center. Catholics, in consequence, believe that a program of social reform must be accompanied by a constructive plan of Christian living before a really basic solution to the Communist problem can be achieved.

Does all this mean that religionists must abstain from social action? On the contrary, it means that the churches must take social action more seriously than they have ever done before. It means, in effect, that unless the Church is willing to grasp the reins of leadership in the struggle for a new social order its future is very dark. The Church cannot continue to preach an individual gospel in an age when social progress is the ruling passion. It must ever be remembered that the masses will give their allegiance to that group which secures their emancipation. If the Church remains in the background it will be swept aside by an avalanche of secularism from which it will be unable to extricate itself.

As an example of what a religious social movement can do I would cite the cooperative project sponsored by St. Francis Xavier University of Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Here a Catholic college has successfully launched an idea which is transforming whole sections from areas of gloom and depression to centers of optimism and prosperity. There is not only no danger that the miners and fishermen of Nova Scotia will turn against the Church but there is every reason for hoping that they will see religion in a new light and give it a new allegiance. Once the Church has solved the economic problem, which is the primary concern of the individual, its spiritual dominion will be more acceptable to the masses. But it is necessary that the Church take the leadership in solving this problem and not the Socialists or the Communists or the Liberals.

The need, in a word, is for a powerful religious social movement, a movement which, in the process of converting society, will at the same time convert the individuals in it to the religious way of life.

If there is to be any sort of a united front let there be a united front of religionists—Protestants, Catholics and Jews. The striking similarity in the social justice platforms of the three faiths offers a basis for such a united front. The differences of dogma and outlook of these faiths are minor as compared with the urgency of religion assuming the vanguard in this battle for a new and religious order of society.

The Weather

Strange, that the most prosaic topic
Of conversation everywhere,
The weather, arctic, mild, or tropic,
With arid or with humid air,

Should also be the most poetic
In verse—except as treated here,
In manner hardly energetic
And with prosaic atmosphere.

When Thomson sang about the seasons
The world drew close to hear him sing,
And many bards, for many reasons,
Have sweetly welcomed in the spring.

John Keats wrote rather well of autumn
And mentioned winter, now and then.
His works were printed, people bought 'em;
Young ladies read 'em to young men.

Since storm and sunshine, spring and summer,
Are dull in talk, though grand in verse,
Will Wordsworth might be wearisomer
In prose, and I be even worse.

KENTON KILMER.

HUMANIZING THE BRUTE

By JOSEPH H. FICHTER

TWENTY years ago on July 4, Woodrow Wilson placed the corner-stone for the new Federation of Labor Building in Washington. In his speech to the representatives of Labor present there on that sweltering summer afternoon, he gave it as his opinion that "the thing most to be desired is that capital should be humanized by being brought into a comprehending contact with the conditions of labor." Having been a Princeton historian for some time during the previous decades he could not have reached this conclusion of a sudden in Independence Day, 1916. But it is one thing to know a fact by logic and quite another to rediscover that fact by experience. The Presidency of the United States gave him the experimental knowledge that the presidency of Princeton had never given.

The brute, Capital, has begun to sense the error of its ways and in these latter years has gradually grown almost rational. Rockefeller, jr., had much to do with the changing attitude, as did Henry Ford. Both sought, perhaps with an eye to better business, to break down the spirit of paternalism that had kept employees at a discreet aloofness from their employer. They made possible a less irrational relationship between the two. Ford brought down upon his shoulders the wrath of the "industrial captains" when he expounded his high-wage, low-price system and put it into successful operation within his own factories. Rockefeller found favor among his own by hiding behind a general theory that contains, none the less, a sound and abiding principle. He said, "The soundest industrial policy is that which has constantly in mind the welfare of the employees as well as the making of profits, and which, when necessity arises, subordinates profits to welfare."

These men and the host of others who have of necessity relinquished the laissez-faire postulate of Adam Smith, have brought a modicum of rationality to their dealings with labor. How much further will they go? Will they some day practise the humane policy that would actually "subordinate profits to welfare"? I think they will; and there are two distinct forces now growing that lead to this conviction. The first is industrial democracy, and the other, cooperatives.

An industrial democracy, in the strict sense, may be considered an economic arrangement in which the large industries of the country are controlled "by the people, for the people and of the people" while leaving intact, in so far as that is feasible, the basic right to private property. The die-hards and conservatives will immediately pro-

test that such a set-up, because it makes control of business a simple matter, would be a firm stepping-stone for any Fascist-minded strong man that may come into political vogue. At first sight it would appear such, particularly if the root meaning of democracy—primarily for the people—is lost sight of. Serious students of governmental economy know that our political arrangement is almost perfect in its form, but in its effects it is far from the democratic Utopia that patriotic spellbinders would have us believe it to be.

Such a consideration is neither here nor there in the present discussion. Our political democracy has managed to keep us a normally free people by various trial and error methods, amendments to the Constitution, and new deals, for 150 years. If industrial relations had been given as much time and thought as have constitutional and political problems since the turn of the century, there is no doubt that a semblance of greater order would rule men's obtaining the prime essentials of food, clothing and shelter. If Theodore Roosevelt had been successful in his anti-trust fight thirty years ago, an entirely different philosophy would now govern our industry and finance. Even in those days conservative observers claimed for the national government the right either to force an industry to make rightful concessions to its employees, or take over the industrial properties. That is all past history but it serves to demonstrate the fact that recent proposals of a similar nature are not as radical as they seem.

I am not straying from the point. There are three successive stages to the arrival at industrial democracy. The first has been passed. During that stage an absolutely free hand was demanded for individual industries on the theory that "competition is the life of trade," and on the false justification that a business is run solely for its profits. In the second stage Rockefeller was the spokesman and he almost overreached himself when he said that the welfare of the masses was equal to, and sometimes even superior to, the enrichment of owners. The third stage is upon us. As Paul Kiniery points out in the *Catholic World* for April, 1936, some of its exponents have stated flatly that "the only real and sound justification for the existence of any industry is the furnishing of employment; its primary purpose is . . . the sustenance of the masses of the people."

Just how this business of, for and by the people would be worked out to its ultimate detail is beyond the comprehension of the most astute. It

must undergo the experimental period of all great enterprises. Probably it means no less than the complete realization of our American dream, a full, true democracy. The problems of running an industry would be no longer the problem of the employer alone; the problem of obtaining the elemental necessities, and even some of the luxuries, of life would be no longer the problem of the employee alone. Profit-sharing by labor would not fulfil the need. The sharing must be both in profits and responsibilities by both capital and labor. This cooperation and organization of the two divergent classes would still leave great power in the hands of comparatively few men, but such a condition is necessary to good order and should differ in no wise from the great power we place in the hands of our elected political representatives.

That employee could work in harmonious co-operation with employer has been doubted in many quarters, scoffed at in others. Till the attempt has been made in its fullest significance no one can pass certain judgment. However there may be some comfort in General Johnson's statement that he would rather deal with Green, Lewis and the other accredited representatives of labor than with "any Frankenstein that you may build under the guise of a company union." Not all of the General's remarks have been so felicitous, but this particular opinion was a true one when he gave it in 1934, and it is even more true now that the industrial giants have gotten over their fright with the upward trend of business.

With the growth of this spirit of industrial democracy on the one hand and that of the co-operative movement on the other, Capital must look well to its long-entrenched position if it means to hold it. The various types of cooperatives — producers', marketers', consumers' — approach the economic moil from a different angle, but of their very nature they are the embodiment of democratic organization. Most of them are of lowly origin, and if left to grow unhampered by vested interests will humanize Capital by absorbing it. Whereas in the case of large corporations all activities of stockholders' and directors' meetings can be controlled by a small minority, the cooperative system allows only one vote to each member, no matter how great his number of shares, and none by proxy.

The history of the movement thus far is interesting, but the implications of its future career in this country, where it has barely scratched the surface, are worthy of investigation. It will distribute wealth in a way that Senator Long and Father Coughlin never thought possible. But distributed wealth has a peculiar penchant for becoming undistributed; and mere distribution is by no means the end of the process. The great desideratum is that control of wealth should come

into the hands of the greatest number of people. Up to now there has been offered no scheme that seems able to effect this as surely and as honestly as the cooperative.

The Brute has required much prodding with the coercive stick of experience before it has come to act in a rational way. Now the time is ripe for "comprehending contacts" with labor that will eventually humanize it.

Against Materialism

To make life one cold look down a rifle's sights?
One hard trajectory drawn with infallible skill?
One stoic calculation, through all days and nights,
That never wanders or wonders and never will?
To freeze upon geometric enterprise,
So speciously accurate, so accurately unwise?—

A piston drives to an end always with keen
Precision, but never a swerve of arm or of mood.
To mock the piston, then, and plunge between
Insensate surety and desuetude?

Rather it is wise
To half-rebuke cold purpose; wisdom-wise
To shunt, postpone, delay, almost repudiate
All things we touch, and all we analyze
By systems scholar-certain and inviolate;
To bend, digress, sometimes to despise
All figure-fact; exactitudes obliterate.

It is wisdom-wise
To feel the cordial curves of blood distinct
From frozen lines of undisputed ink.
Wisdom-wise
To turn from narrow knowledge and to think.

To stand awake and watchful on some hill,
And see and feel the red-winged sally
Of maple leaves and oak; to ponder the spill
Of the serpentine stream from a slick granite sill
Into green secret shades of the valley.

To see the geese, grey in a pallid sun,
Cleave threatening clouds in slender echelon,
And marvel how they go.

To look at the stars, one by one by one—
And know we do not know
Their mystery, and wonder how to know.

To remember things—old things almost forgot:
Perhaps some long-abandoned house (now crumbled rot)
Where the slow tap-tap of the tall wood clock
Meant nothing of time, but only how quiet moments go;
Even to remember the voice that came from the hall,
Soft with the easy shock
Of glad surprise, although
The voice be gone forever and for all.

LEGARDE S. DOUGHTY.

ALMOST THE WHOLE DUTY

By JOHN ABBOT CLARK

IF AMERICAN literature of the twentieth century has fallen short of being first-rate, we probably have only the law of averages governing the appearance of genius to account for it. American criticism in our time, whatever else may be said against it, has certainly tried to do right by our authors, providing them with an assortment of ideas, programs and exhortations.

At the turn of the century, criticism told the American writer, on Monday, to paddle along in the Victorian backwash, and let who would be rude and journalistic. On Tuesday, it recommended rather nervously the letting out of an occasional decorous chirp of glee at the prospect of the then-rising dawn of a sooty, brawling, well-fed civilization. A few years later, when continental artsakism had just about spent its long, frothy course abroad, the genteel critical barriers were timorously raised.

Shortly before the founding of the magazine *Poetry* in 1912, the critical dope sheets featured Roosevelt's Big Stick and Jack London's "Call of the Wild"; shortly after, the desirability (it was to become a cast-iron imperative) of celebrating, preferably in Corn-Belt vernacular, the long-neglected contemporaneity of the contemporary. And even before 1914, post-war disillusionment had become by critical fiat the only validating attitude toward literary material. The Fat 'Twenties followed—the heyday of the debunkers, when life defiantly imitated art, the art of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway.

Since 1918, American literature has been almost pathologically generation-conscious. Up to that time the more leisurely classification by decade had served the literary historian's purposes fairly well. Now, however, those persons who are passionately concerned about the future of American literature count that year lost which sees no younger generation arise and point the Judas-finger at last season's prematurely senile contingent of pointers. At any rate, along about 1928 the generation whose bible had been "The Sun Also Rises" began to lose critical caste; the American Caravans began to mire down a little west and a long way south of an Iowa farm background; and under the goading (altogether well-intentioned) of Henry Seidel Canby, a forbiddingly sane, appallingly level-headed, ungassed and undisgusted under-thirty generation, through its official spokesman, Mr. Harlan Hatcher, declared for Beauty and Goodness and Truth. "Amid all this fury of earthquake and tempest," he boomed, "we are trying to remain calm and

clear-sighted upon Mt. Horeb. . . . We are hopeful, high-hearted, and very industrious."

It was about 1930, also, that the neo-Thomist founding sons of the "Hound and Horn" inaugurated their most interesting policy of the "open door" for fiction and poetry, and the "closed shop" for criticism and exegesis. And the great humanist controversy drew younger writers into positions and posturings that will take many of them the rest of their literary and critical lives to think themselves out of. Regardless of how little respect one may have for the motives and capacities of large numbers of humanism's camp followers, despite the many tactical errors that its doughtier champions committed, and despite the almost fatal atmosphere of humorlessness that characterized too many of their otherwise impregnable positions, it can be said of the humanism of More and Babbitt, considered as a basic point of approach rather than as an inflexible creed, that, whatever its status at the moment, it has had an honorable past, and it is sure of a fruitful and distinguished future.

But until the economic pressure weighing down so oppressively right now is appreciably lessened, the youngest generation of writers will continue to listen meekly to our critics of the Left. According to the Marxian wing of literary criticism, our writers, by embracing dialectical materialism, have nothing to lose but their bourgeois blinders. Perhaps, in view of the almost overnight liberation of American literature and the sudden stumbling quite by chance upon the Great Tradition, the depression has been a literary blessing, at least.

And last, if we overlook the phenomenon of William Harlan Hale, we come to the most recently heard summons to the young American writer, the stentorian call to an agrarian way of life, with its substitution of a time-tested culture for a jungle that has long been mistaken for a civilization. These Southern indictments of a bankrupt Northern industrialism are ideologically fetching even when not wholly convincing. The younger writer will ignore the subsistence colonels of the literary South at his peril. As economists they may be inadequate. But they do know what literature is.

Perhaps the time has come for the young American writer to begin to realize that what he needs is not so much outside advice, as the courage to act upon what he really feels to be the springs of creative activity, principles that have remained fairly constant in essentials from the beginning of literary time. He needs the honesty of character

to be himself, not in the manner of Rousseau, but in the spirit of Montaigne. Certain things the serious American writer must start doing for himself; there are a few things that education might, but doubtless won't, do for him; and the same goes for literary criticism.

One misconception of the literary process which has in all probability been responsible for more premature quickenings and subsequent miscarriages in the field of American literature for the past thirty years than anything else has been the tendency to believe that when a promising novelist or poet went commercial in New York or petered out whiningly on the Left Bank, that the crude, crazy-quilt texture of American life was largely to blame. Otherwise shrewd and often penetrating critics like Van Wyck Brooks and Lewis Mumford have been excusing young writers from school for so long, because of poor ventilation, that many have quit going to classes altogether. They decide that Hollywood is a far better place for combining business and pleasure, anyway. American writers should be able to muster enough fortitude to break out of this seductive critical cocoon.

Another misconception that continues to blight American literature is the pat assumption that most so-called creative writers make today concerning the nature of "reality." That this loosely bandied about term is susceptible of an extension far beyond the limits so arbitrarily, so inhumanely set for it by contemporary writers is seemingly never dreamed of. Some years ago in the *New Republic*, Morris R. Cohen in an article titled "In Dispraise of Life, Experience and Reality" (it was later included in his "Reason and Nature," any page of which has more to say to the aspiring author than all the how-to-do-it books ever published) made some observations regarding the essence and scope of reality that if taken to heart by our boys and girls of letters would, in time, transform American fiction into a product fit for adult consumption. Until our writers do clarify their perspective on this all-important point, American literature will continue to flounder in a sub-human world.

Along with this pathetically limited understanding of what constitutes reality in literature, and, in part, largely as a consequence of it, has gone the belief that only by employing a machine-gun technique can life as we know it today be revealed in all its brutal disregard for overtone and complexity. The fetish of simplicity probably came into American writing with "Three Lives," yielded its richest fruit in the genuine wonderment and warm compassion of Sherwood Anderson's early stories, became harshly stylized in Ernest Hemingway, and is now "on relief" in the monotonous pages of *Story*. Obtrusively naked, stripped-down prose is not necessarily clean, economical prose. Writers like Hemingway have

often used the technique of simplicity to advantage because they have been fully aware of its limitations, as well as theirs. Certain kinds of literary material, and certain special areas of contemporary experience, call for a hard, elliptical, non-committal medium; but it is a mistake to assume that prizefighters, gunmen, truck drivers, bulls of Spain, and trout of Michigan constitute a complete roll call of the sentient world as we know it. Moreover, anyone familiar with the speech habits of the American lowbrow realizes that the talk put into the mouths of these characters in behavioristic American fiction is a whole lot closer to bad art than to actuality. Ring Lardner openly and deliberately exaggerated the vulgarity and slovenliness of the average American's speech, and the result was not infrequently literature. Until young American writers cease their flat, unconvincing aping of their betters, and begin to realize that for authentic creative writing an incessant barrage of grunts and curses is not enough, little hope for the American novel or short story is possible.

That other horn of the fiction reader's dilemma, literary Freudianism, has a great deal to answer for, too. Besides fouling the once noble art of biography and frequently reducing fiction and drama to the level of a fever chart, it has enabled two generations of writers to exploit their egos, their subconscious desires, and their unconscious phantasms in the name of literature. A departure that would add immeasurably to the readability of imaginative writing would be an attempt on the part of authors to search out recognizably human types and, finding them, treat them as such. The vogue of O'Neill, Faulkner and Kay Boyle has had undoubtedly a harmful influence upon scores of their admiring colleagues, who have been led to believe that sickness and tragedy are one and the same. The reader's nervous system has hardly deserved all of the gruelling punishment it has had to take during the past fifteen years.

At the moment, I can think of a number of things that redound to the credit of the young American poet when compared with his brother in fiction. For one thing, he has not been bothering anyone. Keeping to oneself has its point, especially when one hasn't a great deal to say. For a long time now our fledgling poets have done nothing which would tend to raise the blood pressure of the reading public. They have had their small circle of intimates, their seventeenth-century metaphysics, their discipline, their quiet intensity, and their thesauri. For human beings, sexed or unsexed, they have appeared not to care greatly. While their more muscular brethren have been trying to out-ordinary the ordinary in words of one syllable, most of our "significant" poets have preferred to reverse this formula. They have developed a pin-point way with words. If an

austere discipline is called for in the writing of today's fancier, really serious poetry, much more than discipline is demanded of the reader. He must forfeit his right to read anything not being read at the moment, previously read, or about to be read by our erudite writers of verse. This is a sacrifice that many otherwise rigorously disciplined souls are not willing to make, offhand.

To an unfortunate extent, practically all younger American writing today has ceased to be the authentic expression of legitimately private emotions and ideas. On cheaper levels it is a quick answer to the call of Hollywood, or a sly alertness to staple public demand. On more pretentious levels it comes out of the great maw of whatever ism happens to be currently in the mode. But it is our poets, more than any other literary class, who run in packs. They are sad with Eliot, unbuttoned with Pound, and impossible with Gertrude Stein. If Allen Tate casts a vote for cryptic irony, they cast two, thereby losing the franchise. If Paul Engle hears the eagle scream one day and joins in singing the "Internationale" the next, they do likewise. And so it goes. The example of a Hardy, a Yeats, or a Robinson is totally lost, it seems, on a young American poet.

In closing, it might not be out of place to consider briefly some other factors which figure vitally in the general situation, education and criticism.

Although intelligent Americans are at the place today where they are about ready to dismiss education in this country—high, low or intermediate—as utterly hopeless, there is one thing that it could do for the young writer, and which in the name of common honesty should do without further demoralizing delay: tell him frankly that as it is now constituted, it is in a position to do little or nothing for him. However, were a thorough overhauling possible in the near future, education could render the following services: lay a foundation in the simple decencies of writing and reading, and in the rudiments of logical thinking; tactfully guide the emotional responses past the shoals of immaturity; afford a true liberty of choice in the matter of subjects (the liberty involved in allowing a student who may turn out to be a writer to choose between French and Typing, say, is far more apparent than real); try to strengthen, rather than deliberately weaken, the student's sense of personal responsibility for his own education; occasionally set patterns of integrity and forthrightness in the classroom; and give the student a fair and adequate opportunity to judge for himself whether traditional values and emphases still have any direct relevance to the problems of our present-day world.

And most important of all, writing courses—those in "creative writing" by all means—should be dropped, for the most part, from the curricula of all colleges whose English departments have

even the slightest concern for the welfare of contemporary American literature. A certain amount of intensive preparation and wide reading must be done by potential writers sometime, somewhere, and with college lectures being what they usually are, the would-be writer might just as well attend to a few of these prerequisite details while within walking distance of a good library.

As for American criticism, it could help to improve the quality of first flowerings in literature by deflating its stock terms to the point where they might seem a bit more proportionate to the subject of their application. There is far more fumbling with literary terms in current criticism, as Frank Moore Colby often pointed out, than the occasions warrant, a practise that makes for misunderstandings all around and is bound to mislead persons who take literature as God in His infinite wisdom probably intended it to be taken—sitting down. More blistering frontal disposals of mediocrity would, of course, be in keeping, as would a slightly greater inclination to avoid whenever possible New York's literary slums. And if the editors of our New York reviews could decide definitely whether they want books reviewed or merely check-listed, that also would be a distinct gain both for literature and literary criticism. Until they make up their minds, we'll continue to be put off with the truncated notices that came in, supposedly, with James Watt.

Furthermore, literary criticism, particularly as practised by youth, is altogether too solemn for any use. All the Sad Young Critics, in addition to confusing political action with literary endeavor give one the impression that literary criticism started with them, and that in all likelihood the secrets of the craft will be buried with them. Not, however, that they relish the business, because most of them are, have been, or are about to become novelists, poets or dramatists in their own right.

Whether American literature of the immediate future stands to benefit from their ministrations is a matter of opinion. Should they see fit to relax their rigid, social, economic and political requirements for literature, on the one hand, and show a less obsessive interest in the piddling problems of technique and form, on the other, then, because of their many virtues (their intense hatred of the flabby and the pseudo, their insistence upon intelligence and de-loused sensibility, and their passion for definition and precision in the use of terms), it would be very much to the young author's advantage to listen closely. If, though, some such critical purge does not occur soon, writers on either side of thirty-five could do worse than to depend mainly upon their own endowments and capacities for self-criticism. Naturally, if God was antecedently remiss, there is little that education, one's own bootstraps, or anything else can do about it.

POPULAR FRONT AND CATHOLICISM

By WILFRID PARSONS

THE POPULAR FRONT idea, sent on its way from Moscow at the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International in August, 1935, contains the seeds of very serious trouble for Catholics, especially here in the United States, unless we realize its nature in time, and take some concerted measures to meet it. This was the conclusion of my article in last week's *COMMONWEAL*. I would like to take up this danger more in detail in this article and suggest some means by which it may be met.

The slogan of the Popular Front in this country and abroad is that we must join Communism in the fight against Fascism to save democracy. Naturally, this idea takes on different forms, more or less advanced, according to the "historical level" in which each country finds itself. It is, then, the part of prudence to come to grips with it in the form in which it is present to us. In Spain, France, England, it is the same idea; but its meaning is more inclusive as it evolves toward the political arena itself.

Let us see how it affects us in the United States.

Obviously, the first and most overt attempt that is being made is to present the world debate as the simple alternative between democracy and Fascism; and to force everybody in a position of responsibility to make that choice. Obviously, also, Communism in this "new line" is put among the democratic systems. We are, therefore, not only to accept the dilemma as a dilemma, but we are to swallow the story that Russia has gone democratic and even that Communism is the only genuine democracy. Even John Strachey has trouble with that, though he obediently forces his intellect to affirm it. Walter Lippmann in the December *Atlantic* made mincemeat of it.

Now here is the first danger. It is that so large a number of our fellow citizens accept this dictum, with its consequences, as to leave us Catholics in the clear minority. What will happen then, of course, is that Catholics, by the mere fact of opposing Communism, will be considered by a large majority of Americans as having gone over to Fascism, and become anti-democratic. This is already the strategy at work: see the recent statement of the Methodist Board of Social Service and the editorial in the *Christian Century*, commented upon by *THE COMMONWEAL* (January 1). This danger is aggravated by the Spanish situation and the assumed necessity of taking sides on it.

The second danger is that Catholics, frightened by the dilemma and accepting it as true, align

themselves with one or other of its horns. This also is already real: there are not wanting Catholics who pooh-pooh the Communist menace and look on Fascism as by far the greater enemy; and I have heard other Catholics also say that the sooner we conquer Fascism the better. In both cases these Catholics are merely echoing attitudes that people around them are quite ignorantly adopting.

The third danger concerns us not so much as Catholics as it does as Americans. It is that the issue may become so specious that American public opinion will begin to look on the war so patently about to engulf Europe as another of those things to save democracy, and will plunge us into it with a whoop. The attempt to have us do this is so clear that I am surprised there has not been a greater outcry against it. When a conservative and Catholic like Pertinax (André Geraud, political writer for the *Echo de Paris*) finds it necessary to defend his Popular Front government and the Franco-Soviet alliance, as he did recently in Washington in an attempt to induce us to put pressure on Great Britain to join with France to crush Germany, then we can see to what a length the acceptance of the dilemma has become a political necessity for everybody in Europe.

These, then, are the immediate dangers that confront us from the Popular Front propaganda that is flooding us: that Catholics be maneuvered into a position of either defending Communism or abandoning democracy; and that the country at large be quickly steered into a war in Europe that can have but one outcome, the triumph of Soviet Russia.

Let us now consider these two dangers in turn and see what measures can be taken to avoid them before it is too late.

The instinctive gesture on the part of many Catholics, especially those of liberal tendencies, is, out of fear of censure from their fellow citizens, to prove their democracy by unmeasured and unthinking denunciation of Fascism to such an extent as to lose their sense of proportion between the relative evils of the two systems. This is obviously to betray the directions of the Holy Father, to blind oneself to realities, and to play directly into the hands of the enemy. It is true that both Communism and Fascism are evils; Pope Pius XI has had his say about both of them. But they are not equal dangers, nor for the same reason. Let us be clear.

Communism is dangerous for two reasons. First, it is essentially an article for export. By

its nature it is meant to be adopted by every country, and the Communist party of the world, the Third International, including that section of it called the Communist party in the United States, is necessarily committed to make America Communist. Fascism, on the other hand, does not propagandize in other countries to make them adopt its tenets. To sympathize with it in Italy or Germany, yes; but not to adopt it ourselves. The effort to make it out as similar to Communism on this score has failed.

More than that, however, while Fascism is a social-economic-political system of State organization, Communism is that, and also a philosophy of life. It has its definite dogmas on God, on the nature of man and his destiny, and on moral obligation that are the diametrical opposite of Christianity, and the preaching of these dogmas is inseparable from its economic and political tenets. In other words, Fascism is opposed by us on political and economic grounds, in the name of democracy; Communism must be rejected not only on these but also on religious grounds, in the name of God. There can be no question as to which is the greater evil.

There is also another distinction that must be made if we are to have our minds clear on this point. Fascism is not an absolute: it is relative in its origin. Historically, it arises, not as a separate and independent movement, but comes as a reaction, a reaction to Communism or the threat of Communism. That happened after Bela Kun's revolution in Hungary; it brought Mussolini's legions to Rome; it was what made Hitler succeed in Germany. These are facts, not theories. It is the nature of the thing that it be so. Fascism comes into being merely as the instinctive defense of the middle, property-owning class against the threat of expropriation, a demand for a strong central government with autocratic war powers to protect it against Communism; it is, as Walter Lippmann finely says, martial law. Hence if there were no Communism, there would be no Fascism. The thing is too clear to demand more than the mention of it to see its truth. (But when you have spoken this obvious truth, be prepared to have various Leftists proclaim that you are a defender of Fascism!)

Now in this dangerous confusion of mind due to the propagandist attempt to obscure the issue, and thus trap Catholics into taking a position that will later embarrass them, as it has embarrassed Catholics in Europe, there seem to me to be two clear first lines of resistance. They are:

A. We must *refuse to admit*: (1) that the alternatives are democracy and Fascism; (2) that Communism is or can in any sense be democratic; (3) that Catholics, in setting up Communism as the greater evil, are taking sides with Fascism; (4) that Fascism in any true sense has any origin

except as an extreme reaction against Communism; (5) that a war to be caused by the Franco-Soviet alliance faced by a Japan-German alliance is a war for democracy; and (6) that the United States would have any interest in any such war, except to keep out of it.

So much for meeting the attempt to involve Catholics in a false position. A knowledge of that attempt is, of course, a necessary preliminary to this. On the other hand, there are several positive propositions we must adopt to consolidate our stand on an impregnable line. These are:

B. We must make united and persistent attempts to *convince our fellow citizens* that (1) the danger to democracy is real, but it comes from Communism first, and from Fascism secondarily, as a reaction to Communism; (2) that the alternatives are not Fascism and democracy, but democracy and all forms of totalitarianism, whether direct, as Communism, or Fascism, as the indirect result of Communism; (3) that the true interests of democracy lie in an alliance with neither Communism nor Fascism; (4) that we do not have to make a choice between these two unless we deliberately expose ourselves to the choice, through wilful blindness to the real issue; (5) that the real war party in our land today is the Popular Front alliance of Communists and liberals of various shades of radicalism; and (6) that we must all unite on a platform of democracy and peace, which is the platform of neither Communism nor Fascism today.

I say that we must direct this series of truths to our non-Catholic fellow citizens, to convince them of their validity. If we succeed in doing this, we need not fear what they will think of us. The real danger is that they misunderstand the issue, being misled by propaganda designed for this very thing. We will be in trouble only if they do misunderstand it. If they grasp it aright, we do not have to go about convincing them that we are true blue, not bad fellows at heart, real democrats, and the rest of what we have had to resort to sometimes because we did not view the situation intelligently in the first place and so have got ourselves into an awkward position. Let them see the issue as it is, unclouded by propaganda, and we will be safe enough.

Meanwhile, we will not abate our demands for social justice in the social and industrial field. For the moment, that field has been obscured by the political ambitions of Communism. But we must not forget that the Communists are always passing themselves off as the sole friends of the workers. Our social program must not be obscured by this, let us hope passing, political crisis.

This, I admit, puts a tremendous responsibility on us Catholics. It is probably the first time in our history that the interests of the country and of our Church have been identified on so grave

an issue. Yet it is a fact. Our own principles are so clear that propaganda will fall harmless against us, provided we hold to our principles. And our position is impregnable, provided we do not abandon it. It has come about, then, perhaps in the Providence of God, that the interests of the self-government of peoples are confided to us. We will be attacked from both sides, which in human affairs is often a proof of the right. But we must establish before the country with no peradventure of a doubt that the interests of our country and the salvation of the world are dependent on a third position, shared by neither Communism nor Fascism, and that is the defense of democracy and peace.

This strange destiny of the Church has a parallel in the field of philosophy and religion. The Church which for so long was accused of being the hater and destroyer of reason has by a turn of fate become the last and only defender of reason. It is only Catholics nowadays who introduce reason into religion, because we have held to the eternal position that faith is an intellectual assent and not emotional choice; and who keep reason in philosophy, because we hold to an objective order of things, known and understood, at least partially, by the human mind. In the same way, Catholics, who for so long were reviled as the haters of liberty, are fast becoming the last repositories for the preservation of democratic freedom. If we understand this issue aright, in time, then we can easily move into a field of action that will save the world.

When an Elm Goes Over

When an elm goes over
All the village young and old
Come its horny roots to hold,
Handle once the ancient neighbor,
When an elm goes over.

Wren and robin there
Circle in the vacant air,
Crying with a hopeless crying
For their home of bough and branch
Low and shattered lying.

Homeward in the evening going
There the children stand,
Silent-tongued and hand-in-hand,
Marvelling at their old companion
Stricken on the land.

But the times go on again,
World of bird, world of men:
Something busier than before,
Getting used to empty spaces
And a shadeless door.

CHARLES MALAM.

THE BOOK OF ARMAGH: A REVIEW

By CHARLES O'FARRELL

THE BOOK OF ARMAGH, recently printed from a manuscript of that name (called also the Canons of St. Patrick), is the oldest and richest treasury of Church literature in Ireland that has come down to our time. It is the most ancient manuscript book in existence in Ireland in the Latin and Irish languages, and is now given to the world *verbatim et literatim* for the first time, from a copy used by the saint himself when converting the pagan Irish to Christianity. How such a priceless heritage of Ireland's glorious past has been permitted to lie unpublished, on the shelves of our libraries and in the hands of private individuals for about 1,200 years, is something that cannot now be easily explained.

The Book of Armagh, so-called because it is the most precious literary possession of the Church of Armagh, is a small quarto, measuring in height $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches; in breadth $5\frac{3}{4}$ inches; and in thickness $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches; consisting of 221 vellum leaves, on each side of which the writing appears in double columns. The penmanship is of extreme elegance, and is admirable throughout for its distinctness and uniformity. There is no date entered in the book; but the scribe's name, Ferdomnach, appears in several parts of it; and in ancient Irish annals is recorded "the death of Ferdomnach, the wise, and very admirable scribe of Armagh," in the year 844. Internal evidence proves that part of the volume, namely, that containing the Gospel of St. Matthew, was finished on September 21, about 807. Thus an age is assigned to this national monument, which though it falls far short of that of many other manuscripts, particularly those of the Greek Scriptures, is yet of very respectable antiquity, when it numbers its twelve centuries. The language it is written in is Latin, such as was current in the Church during the Early and Middle Ages. But what renders it an object of special interest is the fact that it is the only copy of the New Testament Scriptures which has been transmitted to our time from the ancient Irish Church. Ireland was in early times famous for its copies of the Scriptures, and was much resorted to as a safe, peaceable and well-furnished field for religious study.

But one after another, the books of sacred learning perished: what the Danes spared, fire consumed; and what was fortified against the devouring element, by damp soon became the prey of decay and rottenness. And thus, of all the Bibles which existed, not one copy of the Old Testament has been preserved, or of any part thereof, except a mutilated copy of the Psalms of David; and the existence of this we owe to the veneration in which it was held, being supposed to be in St. Columba's handwriting, and encased in a costly shrine of silver. Copies of the Gospels, more or less perfect, possessing all the characteristics of the Irish school of writing, are preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, of which the Books of Kells and Durrow are the most beautiful. A collection of St. Paul's Epistles, copied by an Irish scribe, and

enriched with interlinear Irish notes, is to be seen at Wurtzburg and Carlsruhe in Bavaria. Copies of these works edited by Drs. Stokes, Zimmer and Windisch may be seen at the library of the writer; but the Gospels and other parts of the New Testament are wanting. Thus the Book of Armagh is unrivaled in Irish literature.

The volume commences with certain memoirs of Saint Patrick, which were compiled about the year 750. They fill nearly forty pages, and contain a large amount of information of an early and very curious kind. They are the oldest and most authentic notices of the saint now in existence, and all other biographies of him either borrow from, or enlarge upon, them. In the philological point of view they are of extreme interest, as possessing the most ancient specimen of the Irish language which is known to exist—Irish as it was written eleven hundred years ago. Surely the book which, as regards religion, exhibits the only existing copy of the New Testament that was used in the Irish Church, as regards history, contains the earliest account of the Apostle of Ireland, and, as regards literature, is the oldest relic of the ancient language of the country, has just claims upon the admiration and attention of all true Irishmen.

Next to the memoirs follows a tract called the "Confession of St. Patrick," written in Latin, and setting forth in simple and unpolished, but earnest language, a brief statement of the author's early life, his religious sentiments, and the difficulties he experienced in his missionary labors.

After this follows St. Jerome's Preface to the New Testament, and then the Gospels in their usual order. In the Lord's Prayer, in the sixth chapter of St. Matthew, we find instead of the usual expression, *et ne nos inducas in temptationem*, "lead us not into temptation," *et ne patiaris nos induci in temptationem*, "and suffer us not to be led into temptation." This alteration, which is found in some of the early Fathers, and in most of the Irish copies of the Gospels, is not sanctioned by the original Greek, which expresses the sentiment as we commonly do in the English form, but was introduced by some persons of pious feelings.

In the enumeration of the twelve Apostles, opposite the name of Judas Iscariot, the word *trogan* is entered in the margin, which signifies "wretch," to denote the writer's abhorrence of the traitor's character. In Matthew, xxvii, 50, occurs the interpolated passage, "Then one, having received a spear, pierced his side, and there came out water and blood. Jesus then, crying with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost." This interpolation has had a wondrous hold on our old religious literature, and continues among the peasantry to the present day. In the "Passions and Homilies" from the Leabhar Breac we read in the "Passion of Longinus," that he (Longinus) admits being a Roman soldier, and present at the Crucifixion, when he drew his sword and stabbed Christ in the side, and afterwards he repented and died a martyr. It found its way into a majority of the Irish copies of the Gospel, as well as in some early versions and Fathers; and seems to have obtained such wide acceptance, that Pope Clement V, at the Council of Vienne, in 1311, condemned it as false and heretical.

At the end of St. Matthew occurs a prayer of the writer in Latin, of which the following is a translation: "O God, Whose mercy is infinite, and Whose holiness passeth speech, with humble voice have I boldness to implore that, like as Thou didst call Matthew to be a chosen Apostle, from being a receiver of custom; so, of Thy compassion, Thou wilt vouchsafe to direct my steps during this life into the perfect way; and place me in the angelic choir of the heavenly Jerusalem, that, on the everlasting throne of endless joy, I may be deemed worthy to join with the harmonious praises of archangels in ascribing honor to Thee; through Thine only begotten Son, who liveth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Spirit, throughout all ages. Amen." This beautiful aspiration, which closely resembles the Collect for St. Matthew's Day, now in use, was probably an adaptation to the writer's individual case of the form which occurred in the ancient Irish ritual at this saint's festival.

In St. John's Gospel it is remarkable that the tribute of honor to the loved disciple of *Eoin na bruinne*, that is, "John of the bosom," as the Irish anciently called him, is not peculiar to this manuscript, but is observable in others still preserved—John of the bosom of Christ.

After the Gospels follows St. Paul's Epistles, to which are prefixed, generally individually, arguments or prefaces, chiefly from the pen of Pelagius. Between Colossians and First Timothy is inserted the Epistles to the Laodiceans, a spurious composition, which at an early age of the Church was forged by some enthusiast, who supposed from Colossians, iv, 16, that such an epistle once existed, and therefore should be supplied, to make good a deficiency. This epistle is found in a great variety of Latin manuscripts of the New Testament, in the library of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin, and has even made its way into some early printed Bibles.

In the first Epistle of St. John, the famous passage concerning Witnesses, which in our Testament, is the seventh verse of the fifth chapter, is in this manuscript omitted, as it is also in the oldest copy of St. Jerome's Latin Vulgate.

The Apocalypse succeeds the Catholic Epistles, and, instead of closing the New Testament, is followed by the Acts of the Apostles. This order is very remarkable, and is peculiar to this manuscript. Speaking of order, it may be observed, that in some very ancient manuscripts of the Latin Testament the Evangelists are placed in this sequence: Matthew, John, Luke, Mark; in which position they appear in the oldest Irish copy of the Gospels which is known, namely, that numbered A. 4, 5, 15, in the manuscript library of Trinity College, Dublin.

After the close of the inspired portion of the Book of Armagh, succeeds the Life of St. Martin of Tours, written by Sulpicius Severus, 363-410, and which is introduced into this volume partly in connection with the history of St. Patrick, who was believed to have been a nephew of that distinguished ecclesiastic, and partly because of the veneration in which St. Martin was held in the early Church of Ireland.

The closing article in the book is a short litany or intercession on the writer's behalf.

Seven Days' Survey

The Church.—A movement is in progress to affiliate American student groups with Pax Romana, an international student federation founded in 1921 with forty-two national federations in thirty different countries. It was introduced into the United States by Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen of the Catholic University, Reverend T. Lawrason Riggs, chaplain at Yale, and Dr. Francis Aylward, former president of the Catholic Association at Liverpool University. A special tour to attend the International Congress of Pax Romana in Paris this summer is being organized in this country. * * * The *Catholic Worker* has been feeding daily 400 men at 115 Mott Street and over 1,000 at the Seamen's Branch at 181 Tenth Avenue, New York City. * * * Speaking at Leeds, Archbishop Hinsley of Westminster, England, called upon the world's colonial powers to set up a permanent international board to administer the territories of Africa as trustees. He said, "Let us frankly own that the last thing the colonizing powers had in mind when occupying 'native territory' was the benefit of the native. Territory has been taken over from its owners—the natives—the powers justifying their action by appealing to the need for expansion for overpopulated countries, to the demand for raw materials, and to the necessity of new markets. . . . Why not try to unite and agree, instead of disputing over other people's property and agreeing only after the disaster of a war? A permanent round table is to be preferred to the battlefield." * * * The Latin America Committee of the Catholic Association for International Peace hails the adoption of the Buenos Aires pact of consultation and non-intervention as the "beginning of an inter-American understanding that may some day develop into a genuine inter-American League of Nations." * * * Since the Salesian Order founded its first establishment in the Czechoslovak Republic thirteen years ago, centers have been organized in eight different cities. These homes for vocational training of the poor are visited regularly by 3,000 young people and three new houses are to be built this year. * * * The National Catholic Press Education Congress will be held at Milwaukee, February 20-21.

The Nation.—As the crest of the flood passed down the Mississippi without overcoming the levees, and as the Ohio valley began to dig out of unprecedented quantities of muck, the first dust storm of the year swirled over parts of Texas, Oklahoma and Kansas. * * * The recommendations for changes in the judiciary are mentioned elsewhere. One result the administration was said to expect from the proposal was a strengthening of its hands in establishing a public-private power pool for hydro-electric energy. The changed court would give the President additional strength in dealing with private interests antagonistic to any sort of governmental activity in the field, and also, because of its apparent Leftwardness, with congressmen and administrators who oppose all concessions

to private utilities. * * * The Twentieth Century Fund, Incorporated, estimates that taxes in the country are the highest in history, averaging \$100 a year for every man, woman and child. Local governments average \$36; states, \$20; and the federal government, \$44. * * * The Radio Corporation announced that Arturo Toscanini, greatest music conductor in the world, will return to this country next fall and conduct a series of symphonic concerts over the air with a new orchestra. * * * The Treasury's "baby bonds" took real hold last year. Sales in 1935 amounted to \$259,000,824, and last year \$473,515,140. About 750,000 persons have invested in them. * * * President Roosevelt urged in a special message to Congress the adoption of a \$5,000,000,000, six-year program of co-ordinated public works, according to recommendations of the National Resources Committee. Streets and highway projects would comprise 25 percent of the proposed total; irrigation, drainage and flood-control, 24 percent; buildings and equipment, 17; soil conservation, 8; slum clearance, sewage and recreation projects, 8; forestry, game protection and pest control, 6; grade crossing elimination, 6; and navigation aids, 6.

The Wide World.—After attacking from the land and the sea, troops commanded by General Franco broke down resistance at Malaga and took the city on February 8. This gave the Rightists control of all the important cities along the southern seaboard. No important action was fought at Madrid, where evacuation of the civilian population continued. At one time the avenue of communication with Madrid was reported in danger. * * * Further steps to crush the alleged "revolt" in Russia were taken. Numerous arrests of men reported to be former Trotskyites led to rumors of a breach between Stalin and the Russian army, but evidence of a conclusive kind was lacking. The character of the government's move was such that predictions of a shift to the right were freely made in Europe. * * * Having given King George VI a Nazi salute, Joachim von Ribbentrop let it be known that a fervent campaign to regain colonies would soon be launched by the Nazi government. Meanwhile Berlin was calling in securities held in foreign countries, ostensibly in order to replenish the supply of grain. It was a curious fact that economic problems seemed only to accentuate religious and cultural suppression. In some quarters it was thought that the reigning difficulties made it easier for the government to exact subservience, for the reason that dissenters could choose only between starvation and exile. * * * Government was reestablished in Japan as a Cabinet far less autocratic than had been expected was formed at the Emperor's request. Nevertheless there seemed no doubt that sums held necessary for the army and navy would be exacted to the last penny. Signs of a more aggressive attitude toward the Chinese Nanking authorities were not lacking as the Japanese fleet was

strengthened outside Shanghai. * * * On February 5, Princess Mary and her husband started on a visit to the Duke of Windsor. Reports that the date had been set for the Windsor-Simpson wedding mingled with guesses that the former king would be talked out of the union. But in Vienna everyone seemed happy, and there was a dearth of news. * * * News from France was relatively cheerful. Finance authorities believed that no further unsettlement of the franc would take place, and were eager to effect a monetary agreement with Great Britain and the United States. But military needs were adding enormously to the budgetary burden, and it was obvious that only skilful management would keep prices moderately outside the area where inflation commences. * * * Great Britain continued along the road of rearmament, with Sir Samuel Hoare voicing the optimistic view that Englishmen would continue to build the world's greatest battleships. No indication that the race for military supremacy would be halted was forthcoming anywhere. Indeed, Russia announced that its strategy during the next war would be based largely on attempts to carry the attack into other countries.

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During the Flood.—The house accounts of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth throw some interesting human sidelights on the flood disaster in Kentucky. Here is an excerpt from Louisville: "The current was very swift, especially at the intersections, and it was almost impossible for the oarsmen to keep to the middle of the street. They bumped into telegraph poles, traffic light standards and even fences and houses. At one time the boat tipped so much that it almost filled with water. One man steadied it by holding on to the street sign until his two companions had emptied out gallons of water. . . . Turning 20th Street at Rowan the boat hit a pole with such force that it (the boat) was broken crosswise in two pieces. The smaller part sank and some of the Sisters floated with the current. Sister Maria Teresa, who was carrying the Blessed Sacrament, was among those who were adrift. The others adrift were Sisters Mary Thecla, Mechtildes, Jean Catherine and Winifred Ann. . . . Sister Maria Teresa was clasping the leather receptacle containing the Blessed Sacrament, holding it aloft until she was rescued, although she sank twice." The Sisters finally all arrived safely at the Good Shepherd Convent where "the Blessed Sacrament was put away immediately. It had been found intact." These Sisters from St. Ann's Convent eventually reached their Motherhouse at Nazareth amid great rejoicing. At Nazareth itself Dr. Greenwell, Health Officer in charge of refugees at Bardstown, Ky., called, January 26, "to make arrangements for Nazareth to prepare bread, soup, cocoa, etc., for flood sufferers. Since there was a shortage of yeast, the baker, assisted by the big kitchen, the little infirmiry kitchen and the Home Economics Department, made approximately 6,000 biscuits while waiting for yeast sufficient to make bread. Following a radio broadcast 50 pounds of yeast was delivered at Nazareth before noon and 300 additional pounds before supper. (We raised the nation!) Nazareth has continued

this service ever since, as well as the laundering of nurse's uniforms and Sisters' linens of the affected houses."

Eucharistic Congress.—The Thirty-third International Eucharistic Congress was celebrated magnificently in Manila, the capital of "the world's newest commonwealth," and the only Christian country in the Far East. Seventeen liners carried foreign delegates to the congress, and Filipinos came from all over their archipelago of 7,000 islands. The main services were held in Luneta Park, around an outdoor altar, and, because of the tropical climate, more at night than is usual. There were sectional meetings throughout the city, and 500,000 were believed to have participated during each of the three days. Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia was the papal legate, and he stayed at Malacanang Palace, the residence of the President. Archbishop O'Doherty of Manila, who had immediate charge of the congress, welcomed all the participants. In his opening address he deplored the infidelity of the world, and exhorted Catholics: "If Jesus Christ laid down His life for us, when we were still His enemies by sin, and if He continues to offer Himself daily, as 'a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness,' we too should be prepared to sacrifice ourselves at all times, both in great things and little, for God and our brethren; and especially for our poorer brethren, who have such little means of helping themselves." Sermons and addresses were delivered in an enormous number of languages, and in all the chief Filipino dialects, the missionary aspect of the Faith being so strongly impressed by the position of the Philippine Islands. All three days, over 60,000 received Holy Communion in the Luneta. On the last night, more than 150,000 participated in a great procession, and afterward the message of the Pope was delivered by radio from Rome: "It is our hope that from a more ardent love of Our Lord in the august sacrament of the altar and from more frequent communion with Him there may come a daily increase of devotion to missions and enterprise for the promotion of missionary activity. For it is from that very source that light is given to our minds, ardor to our souls and supernal fecundity to our labors and good works."

Strike.—The General Motors strike rested at stalemate. The A. F. of L. executive council, after announcing it wanted its craft unions considered in any arrangements, backed out of the picture on February 8, giving a tacit endorsement to the industrial U. A. W. The city of Flint was increasingly tense, the police force forming a center of debate, especially when the mayor, a Buick employee, was granted emergency powers. The sit-down continued forcefully and peacefully. Governor Murphy gave no indication that he would order the National Guard to eject the strikers from the factories. "Everybody must remember that this is the largest industrial conflict of our time and that it has not been marked by a single fatality. If everybody keeps his head it need not be." On the evening of February 8, General Motors, apparently anticipating mistakenly that the almost continuous conference of Mr. Lewis and Mr. Knudsen and

their advisers was to be given up for a time, issued a public statement. No agreement on any point was reported, as conversations had been restricted to the unsettled question of recognition. "The union claims it is entitled to exclusive bargaining rights for all workers in plants on strike, even those outside its membership. . . . The corporation has repeated time and time again its willingness to bargain with the union on behalf of its members, after evacuation of the plants. . . . In order to determine the proportion of the workers who wish to be represented by the union, as against those who wish to be represented otherwise, the corporation offers to submit the question to its workers, by means of a secret ballot, to be conducted under the auspices of the Governor of Michigan. This was not satisfactory to the union representatives." That is the proportional representation, open shop program. The union issued no statement at the time.

The Child Labor Issue.—Section 1 of the proposed Child Labor Amendment to the Constitution, which was passed by both Houses and submitted to the states for ratification in 1924, reads as follows: "The Congress shall have the power to limit, regulate and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age." The other section provides for the suspension of state laws in so far as they conflict with the terms of Section 1. At present twenty-six states have ratified this amendment and ten more are needed to put it into effect. In recent weeks resolutions of approval have been introduced in the legislatures of Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico and Texas, while a resolution favoring it was passed by a large majority in the New York State Senate, February 2. With eleven other state legislatures meeting in regular session this year—nine of them rejected the proposal in the past—the possibility of enactment seems likely. Two years ago, an American Bar Association committee held that ratification was no longer lawful because of the time elapsed since 1924. No one is openly in favor of child labor, but a number of thoughtful citizens, many of them Catholics, feel that the provision quoted above is too sweeping, too vague and too susceptible of interpretation that would interfere with private education. Governor Charles F. Hurley of Massachusetts voiced these fears, February 5, when he replied to President Roosevelt's letter to governors of non-ratifying states in these terms: "It is not too fantastic to visualize as a result . . . compulsory military training, involuntary work on public projects, forced attendance in concentration camps, restriction of religious education and similar actualities inimical to the welfare of our youth and repugnant to the traditions of America. Under the language of the amendment federal jurisdiction might easily operate in many other fields such as that of juvenile delinquency or of psychoanalytic experimentation." Monsignor John A. Ryan has been quoted in favor of the amendment and last year Frank P. Walsh organized a Catholic laymen's committee to work for ratification.

Elihu Root.—Theodore Roosevelt once said: "Elihu Root is the ablest man I have known in our government service. I will go further: he is the greatest man that has

appeared in the public life of any country on either side of the ocean in my time." This verdict may possibly have been altered a little after the historic occasion on which Root, as chairman of a Republican national convention, had to supervise the drifting apart of Taft and Roosevelt. Of his ability there could never be any question. Born on February 14, 1845, he rose from the relative obscurity that surrounded the son of a mathematics professor in Clinton, N. Y., to the position of the nation's best corporation lawyer. It was the age of industrial and political imperialism, and Root knew the law. Rapidly strengthened affiliations with men in public life then brought him rather unexpectedly to Washington, where he manifested extraordinary executive ability. His first job was to disentangle the War Department from miles of red tape. Next he took over the State Department, at a time—1905—when the problems incident to America's coming of age as an international power were growing in number and importance. Root was, perhaps, the most objective person in the Washington of his time. He grasped the nature and value of what is termed "international goodwill" at a moment when it was hazy to nearly everybody else. Out of this insight grew the concerns which have of late identified him with efforts to establish a Court of the Nations. He was, during the years of the Hague Tribunal and subsequently, no romantic giver away of all things to all men. The formula he devised for the entry of the United States into the World Court is a masterpiece of legalistic insight and judiciousness, even though the Senate refused to endorse it. He had a vast experience in all these matters; he did honestly believe that nations would prefer to live side by side with one another in a state of reason if the way could be made clear. To Root was awarded, in 1912, the Nobel Peace Prize. He died in New York on February 7.

The Press.—February being Catholic press month, statements in support of diocesan and general journalistic activity were issued by the bishops. Increasing attention is being paid the marvelous circumstance that a large number of publications are not moving out beyond the periphery of a very limited group, comprising a mere fraction of the total Catholic public and reaching almost nobody else. Loyal families sometimes "take" as many as two dozen papers, magazines, bulletins, etc. The rest cling to an attitude of pernicious indifference, or even undisguised contempt. This situation has not changed much, according to qualified observers, despite a marked improvement in the quality of the Catholic press. In honor of the recurrence of press month, Bishop John Mark Gannon, recently appointed episcopal chairman of the press department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, spoke over the radio following a lunch in his honor given by New York members of the Catholic Press Association. He said in part: "The Catholic press must furnish the people with that knowledge on social reconstruction which will keep them from being destroyed by Communism or any other impending evil. We must purify and strengthen human society with a knowledge of the papal encyclicals. We face an arduous duty and an

indifferent age with unbounded confidence that the truth, when clearly set forth, will prevail; that the errors and delusions which are leading so many adrift today will eventually lose their charm." Meanwhile efforts to strengthen the position of the press are meeting with more than usually impressive support. This is evident from many addresses and conferences throughout the country.

Two Noble Priests.—Journeying on one of his numerous missions, Father Michael Earls, S.J., was the victim of a heart attack on February 1. He had been during a good many years Holy Cross College's walking advertisement of its humanistic prowess. The library often seemed his chief concern, and he was forever collecting mementos to be enshrined therein. Father Earls was himself a prolific writer of both prose and verse. During the days of the "Catholic poetry renaissance" his name appeared in many distinguished periodicals. More recently he interested himself particularly in the achievement of Louise Imogen Guiney. It was always difficult to realize that such a man had risen from very humble surroundings. Yet as a matter of fact he worked in the mills as a boy, and struggled very hard to secure the requisite education. Of that he used to speak occasionally, between the hours of teaching English at Holy Cross. * * * Brooklyn Catholics had no more representative a priest than Monsignor David J. Hickey, who died in his native city on February 2. He knew all there is to be known about priestly experience in an American diocese, and few men had drawn more interesting or worth-while conclusions. By nature he was endowed with a great deal of personal charm, sensed in particular by those who met him, say at Cliff Haven, to which he often came for a holiday. But he learned wisdom from a long and busy life. Born on July 21, 1852, he went into the priesthood at a time when Brooklyn was growing by leaps and bounds. New neighborhoods and new churches were the order of the day; and at the same time the school system had to be developed. The Monsignor was particularly interested in young people. He deplored in particular the conditions which sent so many young families to keeping house in a small apartment. It is difficult to think of any enterprise to which he did not lend sympathy and support.

Non-Catholic Religious Activities.—The Jewish Temperance Association of Boston, Mass., is conducting an intensive campaign against excessive drinking among the 25,000 Jewish families in Boston and vicinity. Over 200 Jewish doctors in the neighborhood have endorsed the movement. The effect on the home rather than impairment of health is the chief reason for the activities of the association. * * * Nearly 100 seminaries, colleges and universities were represented at the inauguration of Dr. John Alexander Mackay as president of Princeton Theological Seminary. In his inaugural address Dr. Mackay said, "The hour has come to challenge the pre-supposition that Christianity is not a way of thought but a way of life. . . . It ought to be possible to clarify theological issues and be Christian while doing so." But "there is no place on earth where it is so perilously easy to make

theology take the place of religion as in the theological seminary." * * * The Houston (Texas) Association for Week-Day Religious Education advances as an argument for religious instruction in the Houston public schools the fact that such instruction is already being given in twenty-eight states. The Association has made a special study of the public schools of Dayton, Ohio, where instructors are required to be college graduates qualified to give religious instruction. * * * The 18th annual Ohio Pastors' Convention has just concluded a four-day session at Columbus. It was strongly urged that where churches had been destroyed in the flood areas they be rebuilt on interdenominational rather than competitive lines even if some of the destroyed churches should never be replaced. It was also reported that interdenominational work in Ohio mining and rural centers was on the increase. The convention voted to boycott Ohio State University until military drill be made optional there.

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Experiment in Rehabilitation.—Twenty-five miles north of Toronto, Canada, a community called King City, founded to embody Catholic principles of social justice and to take families from public relief in Toronto, is growing under the sponsorship of Reverend Francis J. McGoe, pastor of the parish. In 1934, five families with thirty-eight members were selected from the city relief rolls and given two acres a family and fifty chickens. There were two community cows. Frame dwellings costing \$200 were constructed by the men for each family. During the first season the families grew food enough for the winter and in addition vegetables which were sold in Toronto for \$970. In the spring of 1935, these families set up permanent homes on ten-acre plots, each family having a horse, a cow and a flock of chickens. Fifteen more families from the welfare rolls were established in the original cottages and in new ones built for them. Last spring these families were in turn set up in permanent quarters and twenty more families were brought into temporary cottages and small plots. The permanent homes are frame buildings, built on stone foundations, 25 x 27 feet, and costing about \$500 each. Each man in the community works at his regular trade. Time spent by masons, carpenters, etc., on the houses of other settlers is credited to their accounts at the cooperative store. There are two teachers in the settlement, and a physician and dentist visit regularly. The frame church, one of the first buildings erected, seats 125 people. There are now nineteen families occupying ten acres and twenty-one other families serving their preliminary year of training. It costs about \$1,500 to outfit each family completely with land, stock, house and implements. Father McGoe states: "Our experience has taught us that these families will remain and can be happy in the country, for we have lost only three families out of forty-four in our three years of operation. While I am firmly convinced that in the third year they can be made self-supporting, there is no doubt that they can be sustained for one-third of the cost while on city relief."

The Play and Screen

Maurice Evans in "Richard II"

BY HIS performance of Richard in Shakespeare's "King Richard II" Maurice Evans definitely takes his position as one of the leading actors of the stage. Though we in America have known him for only a little more than a year, he has already given us the most poetic Romeo of the generation, the ineffable Dauphin in Shaw's "Saint Joan," and the unforgettable Napoleon in "St. Helena." These three portraits marked him as an actor of extraordinary versatility, one who was never once Maurice Evans, but always the character he portrayed. And now we have his triumphant Richard, one of the most difficult figures in all Shakespeare to make veritable and appealing, in a play which, because it was considered unplayable, had not been acted on the New York stage since Edwin Booth gave one performance in 1878. The reasons for its non-production are evident. Though "King Richard II" contains some of the most exquisite speeches in Shakespeare, it presents peculiar difficulties both to the producer and actor. The producer has the problem of imparting to it a movement which it does not externally possess by bringing out its implicit and internal movement; the actor must make Richard grow and deepen before our eyes, from the weak, cynical and frivolous monarch of the first act to the pessimistic philosopher of the later scenes. And yet both these things this production has accomplished: the former through Margaret Webster's vital and dynamic direction and speed of pace, the latter by Mr. Evans's intelligence, imaginative power and technical mastery.

The peculiar triumph of Maurice Evans's impersonation lies in its synthesis of intellectual subtlety with pathos and emotional poignancy. Mr. Evans is both cerebral and emotional in his acting, a remarkable combination in any artist, and an almost unheard-of one in a man still in his early thirties. Physically he has unusual advantages. Though he is not tall he can when he wishes give the impression of extraordinary dignity. His enunciation is clear, his voice musical and of ample volume, his features handsome and mobile, his eyes extraordinarily expressive. But what is far more important is the spirit that informs and controls everything he does, so that he is equally successful in depicting the ignominy of Richard's early character and the depth of his feeling and understanding in the later scenes of self-confession. No one but an actor of high intellectual powers and keen sensitivity could have mastered the peculiarly shifting and subtle character of Richard, and this is just what Mr. Evans has done. The stage today possesses few such actors as Maurice Evans; it is doubtful if there were many such at any time. His supporting company is on the whole satisfying. Ian Keith has the face, figure and bearing for Bolingbroke, Augustin Duncan is appealing as John of Gaunt, and Lionel Hogarth, Charles Dalton, William Post, jr., Whitford Kane and Olive Deering do good work. Eddie Dowling and Robinson Smith are to be congratulated on their bringing this little-acted play of

Shakespeare again upon the stage, and best of all, they have, thanks to Maurice Evans, brought it back triumphantly. (At the St. James Theatre.)

Frederika

FRANZ LEHAR'S "Frederika" is by all odds the most delightful musical show of the season. It possesses charm, distinction and melodic beauty, and is a relief indeed after the unimaginative knock-about vulgarity of the popular review. Moreover, though it is a Viennese operetta, it really tells a story worth listening to—the story of Goethe's love for Frederika Brion, and though it puts Goethe in a better light than he deserves in that episode, it is none the less told well. But of course it is Lehar's music that is the thing, and very lovely music most of it is, with one song in particular, "Rising Star," deserving of a high place among the compositions by the author of "The Merry Widow." A portion of the public, that which attends the night-clubs, is today afflicted with hardening of the ear-drums. These people will not like "Frederika." They will miss the drums, the saxophones, and voices which rasp like saws, but the great mass of normal men and women will delight in it. Its spirit is compounded of the melody, the rhythms and the nostalgic beauty of the Vienna before the war, a beauty which is eternal in the human heart. The Shuberts have given it a worthy production with Dennis King as Goethe, Helen Gleason as Frederika, and Ernest Truex as Lenz. The two former sing and act charmingly and the last is as amusing as Mr. Truex knows how to be. Hassard Short's direction, the settings of Watson Barratt and the costumes of William Weaver are equally delightful. "Frederika" is a thing to be seen and heard, if possible more than once. (At the Imperial Theatre.)

GRENVILLE VERNON.

The Good Earth

"THE GOOD EARTH" is the motion picture's first important presentation this year; it will remain important through this and many another twelve-month, for it stands monumentally as one of the most grandiose endeavors of the talking screen, poignantly dramatizing the whole human, fundamental struggle of man pitted against nature on the plains of China, as elsewhere. It is a distinguished photoplay befitting the stirring novel by Pearl Sydenstricker Buck Walsh.

Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer started research four years ago—spending \$2,000,000 and more time in actual filming than on any other motion picture produced by them, or by any other. A filming expedition penetrated China, traversed the region which has since become the center of China's intermittent civil wars, and brought back some eighteen tons of properties and nearly 2,000,000 feet of atmosphere scenes. A 500-acre California farm was then transformed to serve as the farmland. The country was scoured for English-speaking Chinese to fill the 68 speaking parts—many engaging for the first time in histrionics; yet, never do they fail to convince. American stars and players are so cleverly interspersed among the orientals that the predominating illusion is of a yellow race performing.

Thus "The Good Earth" unfolds the eternal story of man and the soil: the drama of struggles and hopes, climaxing in the lavish oriental splendor which decayed and fell because its roots in the earth were forgotten for the while—a significant lesson. It is simple, powerful human interest drama, torn from the life story of living men and women. A deep probe is made of their deepest emotions. They become the victims of worldly and spiritual persecution. The very forces of nature seem at times in malignant conspiracy against its puny humans. The swarming of the locusts, the wind, rain and hail storm sweeping down upon the plains, the exodus of the famine-stricken people, the wild scenes in the revolution and the looting of the palaces will not be forgotten quickly.

Miss Buck herself, after viewing the cinematic results of her book, explains that the story began not as a single book, but as the record of the entire span of a Chinese family, rising, as nearly all great Chinese families do, out of the earth—the good earth. Nothing in Chinese life, nor, indeed, in life, is more significant than the rise and fall of families. When new riches take the founder away from the land, this and complicated forces of modern existence cause the family to become physically and spiritually scattered.

In the terms of personalities, the stars give performances of excellence that have rarely been approached in motion pictures, and their support brilliantly rises to the occasion. Paul Muni has continued his high status, as Wang, and Luise Rainer, already in the top brackets of fame, has added decidedly to her luster in a rôle which extended to her more opportunity for performance than for automatic glorification. She is most impressive as O-lan, the mute and humble bride that Wang brings home from kitchen slavery in the Great House, to be his wife, to bear him sons, to tend his father and to work the fields so that one day they may possess much Chinese silver, out of harvests that are fat and full. Virtually standing as a beast of burden and a breeder of children, O-lan never once destroys the illusion that the character in which she is so deeply submerged is Chinese. Her reward for constancy and faithfulness is the appalling disaster of the exotic sing-song Lotus, who is brought into the house by Wang as second-wife, chilling the soul of O-lan. To Miss Rainer falls the difficult task of conveying the suffering, courage, pain and fleeting moments of humble joy deep in the heart of a Chinese woman, almost entirely in pantomime.

The main events are offered as being historically accurate, dating from the Chinese revolutionary sequence of 1911. Sun Yat Sen had the support in the uprising of millions of peasants like Wang who knew little more than that their plight was intolerable. Afterward the old caste distinctions between the classes wither, and complex and hide-bound conventionalities are eliminated. All of these transformations develop in the film.

Sidney Franklin, the director, rose to his task brilliantly. He engulfs the onlooker, at his will, in pity and terror, heartbreak and tempest, and cruelty and beauty. "The Good Earth" is serious without being sordid; it is typically oriental in its pervading air of resignation.

JAMES P. CUNNINGHAM.

Communications

CATHOLIC BOOKS IN A PUBLIC LIBRARY Dubuque, Iowa.

TO the Editor: About two years ago a Catholic book shelf was inaugurated in the Public Library at Dubuque, Iowa (*COMMONWEAL*, March 1, 1935). During the intervening time considerable progress has been made in promoting the enterprise, and a number of cities in Canada as well as in the United States have undertaken the same project successfully. It may interest your readers to learn what was done in Dubuque in view of the fact that the local shelf was, so far as we know, the first to be established in a public library.

The first step was to approach the librarian and the Board of Library Trustees with a plan and an enumeration of advantages to be expected. The "shelf" committee, in brief, agreed to donate Catholic books to the library, while the library authorities offered to place them in circulation as they do other books, give them a special section (labeled "Catholic Shelf"), and rebind the volumes when necessary. It was further agreed that the librarian might reject any book deemed unsuitable. To date, none has been rejected.

With the approval of the Archbishop the project was then publicized through the local Catholic press and an appeal made for the contribution of books or funds. A priest at Columbia College was selected to receive or purchase the books acquired and to inspect them before presentation to the library. He also keeps a file index of all books belonging to the section. From time to time this list, alphabetically arranged by authors and works, is revised and mimeographed so as to be available for schools and study clubs. It has also been found useful to Catholic groups in other cities where a Catholic shelf has been started or planned.

No special method of financing the shelf has been employed. Several Catholic societies have contributed books from time to time and interested individuals have done the rest. The growth of the shelf has been steady but slow. To date there are slightly more than 600 volumes, not counting Catholic reference works or Catholic books to be found in other sections of the library. Incidentally, the library officials are not asked to place on the shelf the Catholic books they acquire themselves for general circulation.

The circulation of books has been even better than anticipated, the rate varying from 10 to 50 volumes a day. When the number of books reaches satisfactory proportions, it is expected that the circulation will increase correspondingly.

The aim of the committee has been to supply the shelf first with current representative Catholic works in every department of literature, and only gradually to add the established classics of previous years. Practically all the new books published during the past two years have found their way to the shelf, and many of the older works as well. Fiction and biography are most in demand, and essays and poetry next in order.

The experience of two years convinces us that the Catholic shelf is emphatically worth while. It places a representative collection of our literature within easy reach of our own people, and it attracts many non-Catholic readers whose only contact with intellectual Catholicism is the public library.

The public library officials at Dubuque have been most gracious in their cooperation and have frequently expressed themselves as delighted with the project from the library point of view as well as from ours. They have also recommended it to librarians in other cities. The local Catholic press (the *Witness* and the *Catholic Daily Tribune*) has contributed greatly by timely notices and book reviews.

NICHOLAS A. STEFFEN.

TERESA HELENA HIGGINSON

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: In perfect accord with the "democracy of holiness" advocated by Reverend Peter Moran, C.S.P., in his Communication, "The Friend of Saints" (January 15, 1937), I present another Beata elect of the laity, Teresa Helena Higginson, English school teacher and mystic.

The following description of one writer proves no artist would "favor her for esthetic reasons" but she certainly "fits into life": "Not many years ago one might have passed unnoted in the streets of Liverpool a little elderly woman, pale-faced, dark-eyed, shabbily clad in black; nothing in her appearance to distinguish her from the stream of tired workers who trod the crowded way. Her name was Teresa Higginson, but no one could have told it. An elementary school teacher of feeble health who played no public part and did no striking deed, yet there is reason to believe that this humble little teacher was favored with God's most sublime revelations."

Teresa Higginson was born in 1845 and at a very early age vowed herself to God for ever. Her life's vocation—"to teach the poorest of God's children how to love Him"—was discovered when she trained as a teacher. Her days were divided between school duties and visiting the sick, her nights were spent in prayer. The Lord repaid her love by admitting her to a close share in His sufferings, even granting her the sacred Stigmata. Our Lord appeared again and again to her, and impressed on her His urgent wish that special honor should be paid to His Sacred Head as the Seat of Divine Wisdom, in order to make atonement for the sins of pride of intellect and disbelief so prevalent in these modern days. Teresa Higginson died February 15, 1905, yet the foregoing words seem more conspicuously applicable in our present world of destructive isms.

Secular teachers form one more group seeking the possibility of a patron saint. Just now the possibility approaches the border of realization. A communication received recently from Monsignor O'Brien, vice-postulator of Teresa's cause in England, announced a special petition to Our Holy Father, from the teachers of England and the United States, to declare Teresa their patron. It is intended to present the petition in Rome at Easter.

A novena in connection with the petition will begin February 7 and end February 15, the anniversary of Teresa's death. All taking interest in the cause in any part of the world are asked to join in this novena. Detailed information concerning the cause, petition and novena may be obtained from headquarters of the cause in the United States: Academy of the Assumption, Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts.

AGNES F. MCCARTHY,

Secretary of the Teresa Higginson Committee.

BISHOP GALLAGHER

Detroit, Mich.

TO the Editor: In reporting the death of Bishop Gallagher in your issue of January 29 you assert that the N. C. W. C. News Service summarized a recent statement of the bishop to the effect that a sit-down strike is legitimate if used only as a picketing measure. As a matter of fact, the bishop added immediately: "But when it [sit-down strike] is employed to seize a plant, it results in illegal possession of property and is wrong. The sit-down strike frequently has been used by Communists to attain their ends and is suspicious."

My recollection is that the N. C. W. C. carried these qualifying sentences. If it did not, it would have been simple for your chronicler to check on the statement in the *Michigan Catholic* of January 14.

It is passing strange that your chronicler could think of nothing else but this mutilated statement when reporting the death of a prelate who, among many other great things, led a successful fight for the defense of the parochial schools in 1920 and again in 1924, and thereby saved the Church in other states similar attacks. It would seem to me that the chronicler of a Catholic review could know more about recent Catholic history. In justice to the memory of a great American and outstanding churchman who was a champion of the common people against terrific odds, I trust you will make the above corrections.

ANTHONY J. BECK, *Editor,*

The Michigan Catholic.

CHILDREN VERSUS STATISTICS

Philadelphia, Pa.

TO the Editor: In your issue of January 8, "Children versus Statistics" is such a splendid article that I must say so.

Each paragraph has a pertinent appeal to a family with two children attending a "statistical" public school. Your contributor has said all the things we have been thinking for several years back. Apropos of this condition, we are not inarticulate, but impotent, because I fear we belong to a very timid minority. Most parents we know, make little or no protest—just "go along." In the interval our schools are stressing "politeness" this year. This was almost forced on them by the prevalence of barbaric slang, which had become the idiom of the schoolroom. A real character foundation is ignored, and even though taught at home is not furthered in the school. I appreciate the good work you are doing.

MARGUERITE MANGAN.

Books

How Freely Associated?

Federal Justice, by Homer Cummings and Carl MacFarland. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$4.00.

THIS history of the evolution of an Attorney-General's functions begins as it should, in medieval England, carries through our own earliest practise from 1643, to 1853 and Caleb Cushing's emergence to be "the first full-time Attorney-General of the English-speaking world," and thence to our present Department of Justice.

There is wealth in this recital for others than lawyers. There is "background" for novelists and film-producers in the trial of Aaron Burr, the fascinating Blennerhassett and Eric Bollman, the young German doctor who loved Madame De Staël, saved her lover De Narbonne from the French Revolutionists, and, with "Tom" Huger of Charleston, rescued Lafayette from Olmütz by means of Fanny Burney's first novel, "Evelina." (That supplement to the official record is taken, however, from unpublished family archives.) There is romance in the aftermath of the Peninsular War and the Spanish land swindles which accompanied the cession of Florida to the United States and confused the issues in legitimate claims of Americans (another family record!) whose dislike for Napoleon had led them to sink a fortune in the restoration of Ferdinand VII. The pillage of California, the problems of slavery, the expansion of railroads in the West, the appeal from law to force in the Civil War, lead up to the myriad problems of this new and radically changed America and show the clashing opinions or "Special Interests of Men" superseding a "Government of Law," with all our once sacredly American principles of society and government fast fading from practise and from memory—until even distinguished educators "rationalize" our "extinct" America.

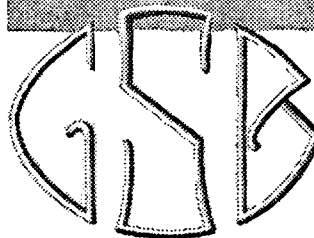
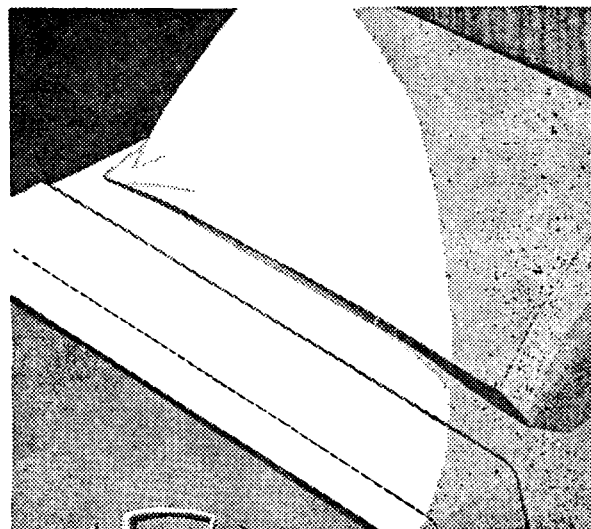
There is much more than romance in this book to the thoughtful student of history. There is ground for a series of studies of those weaknesses in our early American government of which our rationalizers are so intolerant. Our history is not yet written in balanced fashion, with due regard for equally respectable conceptions of the right development of the United States. "The oddly restricted development of a federal criminal law . . ." seems natural, not odd to those who saw in the States "autonomous communities, equal in status, in no way subordinate one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs . . . and freely associated . . . as [an American] Commonwealth of Nations." Those words of the Balfour Committee's Report of 1926 on the nature of the present British Commonwealth of Nations express exactly what many of us in every state of the Union wanted here in 1776, and thought we had established in 1789, and only became convinced that we had not in 1865. Against that background, resistance to the idea of a central government against which we twice fought to death and ruin, is not odd, but perfectly intelligible.

"Disloyalty" and other such expressions, not at all odd when used by Republicans (for they are of the essence of

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NEXT WEEK

FOR AN AMENDMENT, by Joseph P. Donovan, is a distributist document. Father Donovan believes the federal government must act with power "if economic feudalism is going to be transformed in a controlled way into true economic democracy, if ownership of the common man is to replace the widespread serfdom of a mere wage régime." He thinks the Constitution, as a force today, is disastrously inadequate for today's needs, and he wants to change it. The paper was written before the President's special message, but it gains in pertinency from that proposal.

... IN HALFWAY COVE, by Kenneth Leslie, is a story that lines up in the great traditions of the West—of religion, of economics, of education, of culture—the newer traditions of adult education and economic cooperation sponsored by Catholics in Nova Scotia. This is not a repetition of anything of the great deal recently said on the subject of the Antigonish movement. It is a new and deeply known and deeply felt record of the place and people by a most intelligent and aware resident and student. . . .

IT COSTS TOO MUCH, by Clem Lane, a Chicago city editor, casts up the economic liability of being a Catholic family man. The reasoned result is a hard one. After very interesting excursive analysis, the findings tend to center upon secondary education. "Catholic leakage is in the high school." . . . **THE COMMUNIST**, according to M. J. Hillebrand, wears no beard, carries no bomb and eats no babies. As a friend and college mate, the author speaks authoritatively of the college red. The evil of setting up your own target and blasting away at it is that the actual problem is missed and its solution botched. "Do we want to convince Communists and potential Communists?" Then this article will do us good by portraying actual and potential Communists—human persons and not the "horrifiers, devils personified" so many pat and professional denunciators find pleasure in imagining and then hating and totally condemning.

victorious Republicanism) do truly become so when used by eminent law officials of a Democratic administration.

The danger which Washington and others saw arising in 1786, from "the languor of our associated republics" is an intelligible and respectable partizan view. The intense national Republicanism of present-day Democrats is the odd thing, if anything is odd in evolutionary America.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

Inferior Autocrat

Nicholas II, Prisoner of the Purple, by Mohammed Essad-Bey; English Version by Paul Maerker Branden and Elsa Branden. New York: Funk and Wagnalls. \$3.00.

LOUIS XVI, Wilhelm II and Nicholas II are the scapegoats of history, burdened by many historians and still more by public opinion with personal guilt for the decay of their political system. As a matter of fact all three have been rather sympathetic personalities, at least not worse than many of their more fortunate ancestors. A Russian emigrant, writing under the pseudonym of Mohammed Essad-Bey, author of some popular books on Soviet Russia, gives the first fair biography of the last Romanov. Not just a deep and scrupulous work of exhaustive historical research, but one of those light-reading biographies in the tracks of Emil Ludwig.

With the talents of a colorful novelist, Essad-Bey develops the entire life of this modest and humble autocrat from the day when he gazed, horror-stricken, upon the maimed body of his dying grandfather, Alexander II, until the days of martyrdom, when the same mob, who once hailed "Little Father," enjoyed his tormenting and the assassination of him and his whole family.

Sometimes Essad-Bey completes his story by interesting psychological lights. According to his interpretation the Czar regarded Wilhelm II with a feeling of his own inferiority. Though the scion of the Romanovs was the autocrat of nearly a continent, while the scion of the Hohenzollerns was only the constitutional monarch of a state, which did not even include the whole German nation, the Czar evidently experienced in the presence of the German Kaiser the disconcerting feeling of being a worse speaker and a slower mind.

In general Essad-Bey is very impartial, examining the credibility of every statement. Yet his picture of Rasputin seems not wholly fair; it is seen with the prejudices of a Liberal. In a very clear way Essad-Bey explains that the Czar did not abdicate for the "revolutionary masses" but for the army, desiring to uphold the fighting spirit of his troops. He paints a good portrait of Kerensky's ambiguous nature. But he cannot suppress his indignation and human disgust at the indignities and chicaneries which have been the sadistic pleasure of the Red soldiers toward the noble prisoners. They even mischievously destroyed the snowman which Nicholas II made for his children. What a pleasure for mean souls to grieve a former autocrat!

The story of the last Czar reads like a saga of human power and weakness.

C. O. CLEVELAND.

Stubborn Humanity

Soviet Man—Now, by Helen Iswolsky; translated by E. F. Peeler. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$1.00.

FOR AN insight into actual Russian life at the present time this little volume is undoubtedly the best that has appeared. It is not a collection of "Atrocity Stories," nor a theoretic philosophy of propaganda; it is a careful statement of actual facts and a summary of conditions based on first-hand knowledge. It is thoughtful. There is no wholesale condemnation of everything connected with the Soviet nor even of all that is attached in popular estimation to the word "Communism." The change from the absolute Marxist ideal to the development of a new national sense and the reawakening of the deep-seated humanitarian emotions which no radical system can overcome are clearly traced with factual evidences and well-pointed indications of what brought them about. The movement away from the lax morality of early Soviet legislation began in the people. In some cases, such as the legislation on marriage, the new law remains as loose as was the old; but the practice has changed. The Soviet State now favors a strong family life; to impress this on the people, Stalin paid a visit to his mother.

Instead of universal Communism the Russian newspapers now use the phrase "Sovietic Fatherland." The bread tickets have disappeared; educational reform once more makes parents responsible for the conduct of their children. Taxes are still leveled on the necessities of life; the State has failed in its efforts to substitute itself for the family. It is well that the author points out the danger of looking upon Russia as a ruined nation. She performs a service in dispelling the notion that Communism has completely despiritualized the Russian people and produced the superman hoped for by the atheists. There is a new man in Russia, but he is a man who is ready for genuine religious truth, a man who has buried the suffering of the old régime of the czars and the tragedy of the Soviet persecutions but in whom are alive the high human aspirations of a young heart, naturally noble, yearning for treasures yet to be obtained.

There is no denying that the hatred let loose by the Revolution upon the clergy brought victims without number. The Russian clergy (of the old Orthodox Church) are still in the shadow of the disrepute into which they had fallen; Orthodox and Catholic alike have suffered a common persecution. From this common suffering has come a new brotherhood; the Church has not succumbed but her day is not yet. Persecution still goes on; but the prisoners are always prosecuted on some trumped-up charge other than their religion.

Soviet Russia is another experiment in the production of an unnatural man which has failed. What has happened is a revolution led by a group of idealists whose revolution has triumphed but whose ideals have withered. The reign of the Czar would not have continued even if the World War had not come. The Russian peasant was stirring and his demand for education and comfortable life could not long have been resisted. Although the change is not yet complete, a new Russian with the tradi-

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tional qualities of his race but adapted to the needs of modern civilization is well on the way toward complete formation. The opportunity of the Church is to recognize that atheism is always a sham and never really in the hearts of the people. What the people want are the benefits which civilization has brought to other nations; you cannot tear religion from the heart of mankind.

FRANCIS AUGUSTINE WALSH.

A Noble Woman

Memoir of Mother Mary Judith, Congregation of Our Lady of Sion, 1847-1932; by a member of the Community. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. \$2.40.

THE CONGREGATION OF OUR LADY OF SION is a community of women whose prayers and good works are offered in intercession for the conversion of the Jews. It was founded, 1856, in Paris by the brothers Ratisbonne, converts themselves from Judaism, and priests. A colony of these nuns was established in the Bayswater district of London in 1860 by Monsignor Manning to conduct a secondary school for girls in the parish he ruled as Superior of the Oblates of St. Charles.

In this district Mother Mary Judith (Ellen Hodge) was born, 1847, into a middle-class Protestant family. In spite of home associations quite unsympathetic she was attracted to Catholicism at the early age of fourteen and was received into the Church four years later. At twenty-one (1868) she began her novitiate in the mother-house of the Congregation of Sion in Paris, incurring thereby the violent but temporary wrath of her parents.

After teaching nine years in France, she came back, 1877, as assistant superioress to her native Bayswater. She was chosen, 1889, superioress of the Bayswater convent and, except for a very brief retirement, continued to function as such till her death in 1932. Under her firm and prudent management the community took on larger proportions and moved over a wider field of activity. A capacious secondary school for girls is the most imposing monument to her patient endeavor and constancy of purpose in the face of many obstacles. Through this institution the pervasive influence of her spirit is still potent for good. To this influence Dr. J. P. Arendzen pays tribute in a preface. But even without his assurance we could well believe it on the strength of the impression resulting from the noble portrait of a valiant woman by her anonymous biographer. The hidden life of a religious does not easily lend itself to biographical representation. Consequently we need not seek in this work wealth and variety of incident nor even delicate analysis of intellectual or mystical states and experiences. It is still the lifelike presentation of a fine religious superior of whose kind many here and in Europe found no biographers.

Recalling the career of Mother Judith just outlined, as well as her good sense and genuine humility we cannot help thinking that the biographer's fervor ran away with discretion when she penned the paragraph: "Mindful of the real meaning of the word education (*e-ducere*, to lead out) Mother M. Judith's solicitude embraced the whole child, its spiritual faculties of mind, heart and will

as well as its physical well-being. The mind had to be led out from ignorance to knowledge; the will from weakness to strength; the heart from selfishness to sacrifice for the general good. Her life-work consisted in creating the environment and the factors necessary for the development and training of each one of these powers that go to make up the perfect Catholic woman, one who is capable of taking her place in every sphere of life and is ready to shoulder the responsibilities that normally fall to her lot as wife and mother."

"Tosh, child," we imagine Mother Mary Judith exclaiming, "don't hold me personally responsible for these awful purposes. You must have discovered them in a school prospectus."

Otherwise the panegyric is not intolerable. It is definitely not hagiography. The story is simply told.

PATRICK J. BARRY.

Common Sense

On Growing Old Gracefully, by Reverend Charles Courtenay. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.00.

MOST of those who grow old much beyond the average seem to think that they have discovered the secret of longevity. The main part of that secret, however, is due to inheritance rather than to any special mode of life. Almost without exception the man who lives much beyond three score and ten had parents or grandparents who themselves lived long and transmitted the inheritance of longevity to their progeny. Pick out your grandfather, Oliver Wendell Holmes said, if you want to live long.

Some of the advice founded on the experience of the old—Reverend Mr. Courtenay is eighty-seven—is well worth while. No book that I have read seems so promising in this regard as this one. The author thinks that the mind is more important than the body for long life. The most important factor is keeping occupied. Not work but worry kills. When a man gives up work he is tempting Providence, one might say. Men rust out much sooner than they wear out. Some of the maxims he gives are very valuable. They all emphasize the doing of things for oneself: "Never let anybody do for you what you can do for yourself; never mislay things thoughtlessly; never worry yourself or anybody else over trifles, in fact, give up the use of the microscope; never look too far afield or too far ahead, drop the use of the telescope; never let things disturb you, but if they do, never let them disturb others. Join the self-help society immediately."

The book is full of directions as wise as these. He dwells particularly on the duties of old age. The old must not impose on others but must keep within their rights. He dwells on the defensive power of a "held tongue." "Silence speaks for you all the time." He has the answers to three pertinent questions: "When does old age begin?" That depends on the person; "Can we find the secret of long life?" It is a mental rather than a physical secret; "How can we spend a happy old age?" By forgetting about ourselves and thinking about others. Here is a book by a very wise man.

JAMES J. WALSH.

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Strange Blend

*Anton Chekkov, by Princess Ninan Andronikova
Toumanova. New York: Columbia University Press.
\$3.00.*

THERE are some good books about Chekkov, but there is nothing better than the present biography. It is carefully written and well-informed. The strange, melancholy story is told with grace and a sense of true values. Literary taste of a very highly developed kind is evident throughout. Best of all, however, is the mood in which the book is written—that blend of objectivity with poetry which only a Russian of insight can somehow manage to acquire. The Princess seems to have written the volume originally as a university dissertation. Yet it has no trace of a disagreeable academic flavor and is as a matter of fact a quite companionable book.

Miss Cather's Bishop

*Archbishop Lamy, by Louis H. Werner. Santa Fe,
New Mexico: Santa Fe New Mexican Publishing Cor-
poration.*

AMONG the great churchmen of pioneer days is Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy, upon whom Willa Cather has conferred literary immortality. Mr. Werner has tried to set the interesting personal story against the background of New Mexican history. His volume contains a great amount of lore, gathered reverently and painstakingly. But, since the material is very loosely organized, one can hardly say that Mr. Werner has written a biography. Even so, he has certainly earned in advance the praise of all future writers. Details of information (hard to gather) concerning the principals and the minor figures in the story abound.

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